

Resources for Prisoners

The third issue of *Walkin' Steel* is out. Produced by the Committee to End the Marion Lockdown, (CEML). The focus of this newsletter is the campaign to abolish Control Units that is being developed across the U.S. and Canada. They want and need contact with Control Unit prisoners. They also need support from outside people who can use the newsletter to educate people about Control Units. Free to prisoners, others should help out with a donation. Write:

CEML
Box 578172
Chicago, IL 60657-8172

We recently received the first issue of *Body Memories: Radical Perspectives on Childhood Sexual Abuse*. In their words it "is an attempt to create a radical magazine about the sexual abuse of children. It is radical in that we are trying to look at the root of the problem in our society, and propose radical ways to end abuse. Radical in that it seeks to draw connections between the abuse of children and the overall context of an oppressive society. Radical in that it seeks to fight the exploitation of children as part of an overall struggle for change."

Since some members of Bulldozer are going through our own experience of dealing with having been abused as children, we really support the effort to explore the radical implications of the large scale abuse of children that until quite recently was denied by virtually everyone: the church, the state, the family, psychiatry and other therapeutic techniques. The sexual and physical abuse of native children which took place in the Christian residential schools over several generations shows clearly that the abuse of children has explicit social and political — in this case colonial — dimensions. The ramifications of this abuse are still being felt in native communities across Canada. The efforts of native women and men to expose this abuse shows that though it might be suffered in a terrible isolation, the healing must be done individually and collectively.

Regular subs are from \$4 to \$12 for 4 issues. Outside the U.S., please add \$4. to \$10. *Body Memories* will be of use to anyone working with survivors. Write:

Body Memories
P.O. Box 14941
Berkeley, CA. 94701

Oh-Toh-Kin is a highly recommended new native magazine from Vancouver. Please see centrespread for a longer review.

Joint Venture: The Newsletter for Lifers is a new publication dealing with the issues confronting lifers in Canada, defined as both those serving life sentences in federal prisons, or those on parole for life. It is a joint product of both prisoners and an outside community group. Free to prisoners, donations would be appreciated from others. Write:

Infinity Lifers Liaison Group
Box 772, Stn B
Ottawa, Ont K2P 5P9

The *Harambee Flame* is a pan-Africanist newsletter from the Harambee African Cultural Organization at the state prison in Lincoln, Nebraska. Their creed is "together we seek to show that which is us, to expand our collective consciousness of who we are and whence we come. We exult in the fact that Afrikans are beautiful in our own right rather than at the expense of any other ethnic group. And in the true spirit of the Swahili word, *Harambee*, we promote the idea that cultural exchange is germane to human growth". Subs are \$7./yr. Write:

Harambee Flame
P.O.Box 2500
Lincoln, NE 68542-2500

Bayou La Rose covers many of the same areas of struggle as Bulldozer. They are working on a special resource issue. This will be invaluable for any group wanting to reach prisoners. They recently purged their mailing list, so if you used to get it and haven't received a copy in the last year, contact them. Or if you've never seen it, write:

Bayou La Rose
c/o Arthur Miller
302 N. "J" St. #3
Tacoma, WA 98403

Prisoners' Legal News amongst other issues of relevance to prisoners, carries short descriptions of recent legal decisions affecting American prisoners. Donations and subs for the U.S. should be sent to: PLN, POB 1684, Lake Worth, FL 33460; In Canada write: Arm The Spirit, P.O. Box 57584, Jackson Stn, Hamilton, Ont L8P 4X3. Letters and articles should be sent to: Paul Wright, #930783, POB 5000, HC63, Clallum Bay, WA 98326.

Magazines, newsletters and other propagandists — *Open Road* is no longer publishing a newspaper, but they're still active. They do an anti-authoritarian radio show, info and video nights, an annual "Rock Against Prisons" and are working to set up a "Books to Prisoners" program. They've been having problems with the Post Office, much of their mail has been returned. Their new address is:

Open Road
POB 66102 Stn F
Vancouver, BC V5N 5L4

Issue #4 of *Convictions*, a magazine "by prisoners for prisoners and their people" is now out. They pay their authors and illustrators. Subs are \$10/yr for prisoners, \$12/yr for non-prisoners. Write:

Convictions
P.O. Box 1749
Corvallis, OR 97339-1749

Address corrections for supporting Demba Diop in the last issue:

Ms Gabi Himlet c/o Buchfernleihe fur Gefangene
Schweizer Allee 25
4600 Dortmund 1,Germany

Mr Geert Oetken
Hohenzollernring 11
5000 Koln 1,Germany phone 0221/251731

Submissions sought for Prisoners' Justice Day from Canadian prisoners

August 10th is set aside by prisoners each year to commemorate those who have died unnatural deaths in prisons. Prisoners' Justice Day is known to most prisoners as a day of fasting and not working as a way to remember and show solidarity with the prisoners who have been murdered and those who have committed suicide or died of neglect. As a show of solidarity on the outside, prisoners supporters also hold activities in the community on August 10th.

The Prisoners' Justice Day Committee of Toronto is planning programmes in English and French for the national radio show sponsored by Toronto's CKLN-FM. The programmes will consist of prisoners' writing: opinion pieces, poetry, drama, stories and songs. If you'd rather not put things down on paper, just send a cassette tape and say what you have to say; tell your friends who can't read, and those who speak another language, that we want to hear from them too.

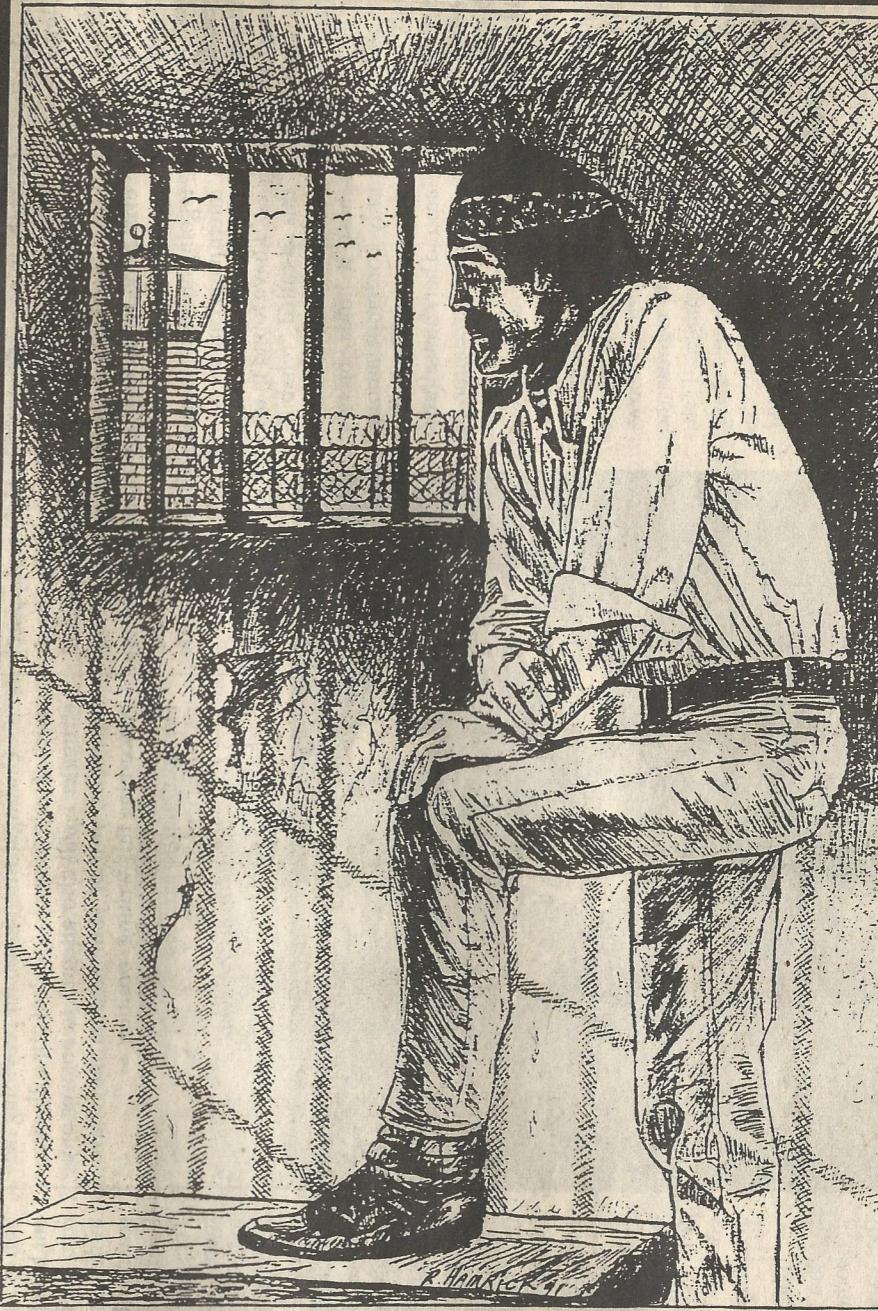
Cost of tapes and writers' fees will be paid by A Space art gallery. Deadline for submissions is May/31/92. Please get your material in the mail before that date. This year's programmes will reflect not only on Prisoners' Justice Day, but also focus on the theme: "Toward a Renewed Solidarity". Canadian prisoners and their supporters who are interested in writing about this, please contact:

Prisoners' Justice Day Committee
A Space
183 Bathurst St. Ste 301
Toronto, Ont M5T 2R7

Prison News Service

A BULLDOZER PUBLICATION

MARCH/APRIL 1992
NUMBER 35
Donation \$100



Marionnette returns: Bill Dunne "expelled" 1
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Complaints = Conspiracy

On 5/Feb/92, the lunch break for pre-transfer prisoners was slightly longer than usual. The extra time to finish eating before being rushed back to forced labor on military contracts was appreciated, but it wasn't a gift. As the 38 prisoners moved out of the chow hall, a gang of swine led by Lt. Ennis risked starting a riot by "arresting" six prisoners from their midst in an obviously pre-planned assault. As the handcuffed prisoners were taken to segregation, they could see over their shoulders the rest of the prisoners being herded into the former Vocational Training area, presumably so the swine could strip search them and ransack the housing unit and factory in secrecy. The prisoners taken to the hole were told that they were being locked down "pending investigation"; two were even put directly into disciplinary segregation despite not having been so much as charged with any infraction. A seventh prisoner who had been arrested the previous day was also put under investigation.

During the next two days, the prison's investigative officer Lieutenant Lacy conducted interviews during which he claimed the investigation was of a purported plot to blow up or burn down the Unicor factory, where the slave's choice is between military work or lockdown punishment. He wouldn't cite any hard evidence of the reality of any plot though. The evidence at which his questions seemed aimed, however, had more to do with people's attitudes towards Unicor work than knowledge of, or involvement with, any substantive plot. It was as if not liking being a slave was to be construed as guilt of plotting rebellion — though not, as it turned out, directly. Four of the seven were returned to the pre-transfer unit by 7/Feb — as if anything they could have said would have caused their release had there been a shred of evidence to support their segregation.

Lacy's interviews of two of the remaining prisoners, Tim Blunk and this writer, more clearly exposed his ulterior interest in prisoners' objections to Marion factory work. On 7/Feb, Lacy told me he had "read some of your stuff" and suggested that Tim and I — either through PNS/M and other writings or verbally, or both — had planted the objections to forced labor in the other prisoners' minds, as if slaves can't recognize slavery unaided. He repeated these notions to Tim in a subsequent interview and also implied that we both had some sort of what Tim described as him feeling was a "terrorist imperative" that would of course dispose us to blow up or burn down anything associated with the government, particularly the military linked factory. Tim was finally released from segregation on 19/Feb and Paul Jorgenson on 27/Feb, leaving me the solitary conspirator and unsure if that's a compliment.

Unicor dangerous to health

Lacy also expressed considerable interest in prisoners' other objections to Unicor work at Marion, again with the insinuation that the discontent was more politically motivated and instigated than real. He dismissed prisoner medical complaints like dizziness, fatigue and respiratory ailments that even Physician's Assistants have blamed on hazardous materials and practices used in the factory with the assertion that the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) had tested the factory air and found it safe. Prison safety officer Sallee, however, will not give up a copy of this alleged report and the EPA office responsible for maintaining such records insists no such report is on file. Even if some such report existed, it would not prove safety unless its methodology included specific as well as general testing in light of the complex work station environment. Managerial refusal to use personal exposure detectors suggests specific testing would contradict official claims about breathing hazards. Lacy also seemed to think Unicor's staff withholding of safety equipment for disciplinary and economic reasons, arbitrary and unfair discipli-

nary and pay practices, speedups and petty harassment were fanciful figments of pinko-agitation rather than self-evidenced causes of legitimate displeasure with Unicor servitude.

Lacy presumably used these and other Investigation 101 tactics on the many other prisoners he questioned. His apparent game was to get people to say things inconsistent with what they'd been known to say elsewhere, write in their letters, say on the phone or were reported to think by snitches that could form a basis for suspicion of either plots or perpetrators. He told people that "everyone" was saying they'd burn Unicor if they could, apparently to trick someone into the admission. He feigned concern and an attitude that complaints had legitimacy. He went so far as to say, "we of the far right, you of the far left" have things in common, in order to demonstrate how reasonable he could be — as if we might collaborate to our mutual profit. He told at least Tim and I that both he and Warden Turner had been ignorant that Unicor work was involuntary, having thought it something sought by prisoners — as in all other federal prisons — as if that would encourage prisoners to enlighten him (to their detriment). Turner denied ignorance on 29/Feb/92, but both had reason to lie and are federal prison employees. Lacy kept saying he didn't think much of the (secret) basis for the investigation and that he was on the verge

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of concluding it to lull his subjects into unwariness. And he hasn't concluded it.

Conspiracy charge ignores reality

The conspiracy was contradicted by several factors, all conveniently ignored. Those who were among the most critical and the least "company men" or those associated with them were the ones snared in this witch hunt and were well aware they would have been the most likely scapegoats for any real burning down or blowing up. Anyway, no explosives are available and the only flammable liquid available in any quantity would require a lot of sloshing around and igniting, impossible to do surreptitiously, given the set-up. Nor is anyone confident the swine would get around to evacuating the facility before the prisoners all died of smoke inhalation if there was a fire. The smoke a Marion fire would produce would be comparable to the sort of smoke that kills passengers in minutes in airline fires. And what would be the likely result for the survivors (if any)? The event would be blamed on a group of "trouble-makers" (whether rightly or not) who'd be likely to get another five years or so of lockdown, everyone's transfer would be delayed for months at least, the factory would be rapidly restored, probably with working conditions even more oppressive.

Although explanations for the administra-

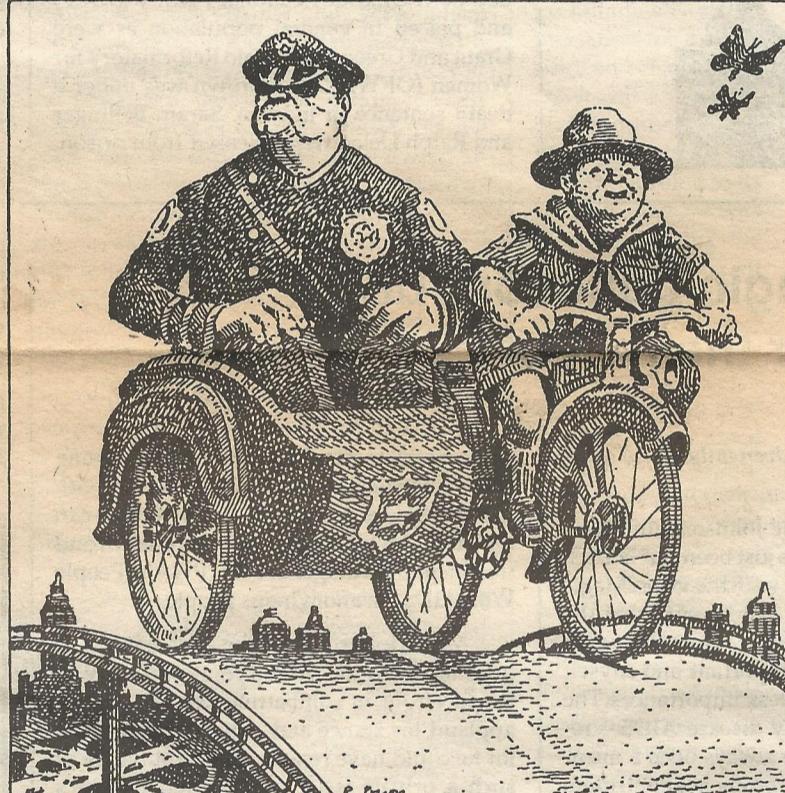
tive invention of this conspiracy story vary, it was clearly an act of intimidation, suppression of dissent and censorship. The reign of Warden Turner the Turd has seen implemented many oppressive measures, increasing tension and disquiet among prisoners generally. One of the most visible attacks was the virtual doubling of the duration of the pre-transfer "program". Like the others, it had ramifications. It led prisoners to become both more conscious of and concerned about the health hazards of Unicor work, now that they are being exposed longer. As a result, complaints and requests for relief increased, making the administration feel threatened.

In reaction, officialdom attacked the messenger, typically trying to smother unrest rather than address its causes. It snatched those most inclined to resist their oppression by so little as asking that their rights and the law be respected. It subjected them to the hole and rednecking of their property (personal property is virtually always lost or damaged in such moves) as punishment in rough proportion to their exercise of their human and constitutional rights. Whether or not anyone is ultimately decreed guilty as a result of this investigation, punishments have been inflicted and messages sent: It is dangerous to complain, however rightly. It is dangerous to associate with those who do or are otherwise heretical. Absolute prisoners' rights exist only in popular mythology, and it is dangerous to appear otherwise. Powerlessness is dangerous and prisoners are powerless.

Given the courts' abdication of their responsibility to oversee prison operations where prisonrats raise the holy icon of "security", prison officials will likely use such conspiracies increasingly as instruments of repression. Already they are doing so at USP Marion. There now are always at least a few people in the hole under investigation of plotting escape, mayhem or something secret. The practice telegraphs what ideas are displeasing in official sight and with whom it is unwise to associate. It also creates uncertainty and stress in prisoners and diminishes their already meager security, people in such straits being easier to manipulate and control. Nor is Marion the only prison at which the broad net

continued (see Conspiracy) on page 9

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Marionnotes on page 9**



An exclusive photo of Warden "Al" Turner, on his way to Marion Penitentiary to save the day after the previous warden had gotten soft on the prisoners.

After seven years and seven weeks— Bill Dunne "expelled" from Marion

As we were finishing the layout, Bill informed us that he had been transferred. Here are excerpts from his letter.

After seven years and seven weeks, I'm no longer at USP Marion. On the last day of winter (20/Mar/92), I departed the dungeon and landed at the lesser lockup of USP Terre Haute, Indiana, about 150 miles northwest of Marion. The move was rather sudden and somewhat of a surprise and had more the character of expulsion than official certification that I've been demasted and rendered suitable for regular prison. An official here expressed the opinion this very day — and told me I'd be watched as close as close could be in case I was looking for any fence therapy.

I was finally let out of segregation and returned to the pre-transfer unit on 16/Mar. Upon arriving there, I learned that

Tim Blunk had already been transferred (to Lewisburg) — an expedited and unusual process that didn't require any of the standard rigmarole of signing and submitting and waiting that put him out some four months early. The day after I was let out, a unit manager slithered up to my cell and told me I'd be coming here (Terre Haute) within weeks. I thought it was some sort of trick, but the abnormal process was the same as they'd carried Tim up to that point. Two days after I was let out of the hole, an associate warden, (AW) came up to the factory to say he thought I was "guilty as hell" of being "deeply involved" in something, although he did admit it wasn't what they'd been investigating. (True!, they hadn't been investigating anything!) The Special Investigative Supervisor (SIS) had suggested that we had some sort of "terrorist imperative"

to do the nasty to the factory, and the AW obviously still harbored that notion. That was probably why I was held in the hole till Tim was already gone and we were transferred separately even though the first leg of our trips was the same. Everyone knows it's a law of physics that two pinkos together can't help but rip off their chains, break out of the bus cage and overpower 5 armed swine — just for something to do of course. I was rushed to the bus the day after talking to the A.W. The ride was beautiful, but I can't think of much scenery that wouldn't have been after so long at Marion. ∞

(Please remember to change Bill's address on your mailing list.)

Bill Dunne 10916-086/3K
P.O. Box 33
Terre Haute, IN 47808

Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission

There have been a lot of rumors of abolishing the Parole Board in Ohio. Here are the facts in relation to this rumor. In 1990 former Governor Dick Celeste created the Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission to study Ohio's sentencing scheme and issue recommendations for changes to the General Assembly. It will be their job to act on making the recommended changes into statutory law.

Members of the commission include five Judges, two Senators and one State Representative, the Head of the Ohio Public Defender Commission, a prosecutor and a sheriff. The Bar Association has a delegate and there is an advisory council consisting of representatives from the Ohio Halfway House Association, Correctional Institution Inspection Committee, Case Western College of Law, Ohio Chief Probation Officers, County Commission Association and Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections.

The Commission is in consensus that violent and career criminals should be incarcerated in prisons, while third and fourth degree non-violent offenders be placed in local facilities. Also that post-release (Parole) conditions and services should be imposed on all offenders upon release from serving their minimum sentences.

A consensus was also reached that the sentence meted out would consist of a basic minimum sentence, determined by the Judge who considers the offense and history of the offender. Ohio minimum sentences would be what is served in prison (flat time) subject to "hard time" (rather than good time) which would extend the minimum sentence for misbehavior in prison. The Parole Board would be limited to determining the imposition of hard time and the manner and length of post-release supervision upon serving the minimum sentence.

A consensus was also reached that the caps on consecutive sentences be removed under a system that allows reviews of consecutive sentences at a future date, with the sentencing decisions subject to appellate review. Also, the mandatory ranges of sentence enhancements for repeat aggravated felonies should be eliminated — leaving one range of penalty for each level of offense, with the presumption that repeat offenders go to prison (i.e. 3,4,5,6,7 to 15 yrs.).

Reviews of sentences by the sentencing judge at a future time, to take into consideration changes in circumstances demonstrated by the prisoner's behavior for possible release, will also be instituted. This would help counter the removal of caps and allow a Judge to release a prisoner deemed "rehabilitated" yet serving a lengthy sentence.

All in all, due to the present state of overcrowding and actual incarceration sentences which don't provide for the turnover of prisoners it appears Ohio will be returning to the same sentencing scheme that was in effect prior to the sentencing changes in 1984. However there will be a flat minimum sentence that gives a presumption of release unless Bad Time is added on. The Parole Board will be limited to this function and to supervising Post-Release (Parole) Supervision and conditions.

The commission will issue its final recommendation in June 1992. Input regarding the Commission should be directed to:

David Diroll, Executive Director
Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission
400 East Tower St. Suite 120
Columbus, OH 43215
(614) 466-1833

Thanks,
John Perotti
POB 1368 #167712
Mansfield, OH 44901

Just Us — Ohio Style

Three days before former Ohio Governor Dick Celeste left office he commuted the death sentences of Donald Maur, Leonard Jenkins, Willie Jester, Crazy Horse Seiber, Debra Brown, Rose Grant and Elizabeth Green to life in prison. Celeste also commuted the prison sentences of



Saram Bellinger and Ralph Deleo to time served and issued full and unconditional pardons to Freddie Moore and John Salim. Celeste, who opposes the death penalty, commuted the death penalties of those male prisoners closest to execution and all female death row prisoners.

On Jan 14/91 George Vainovitch became Ohio's Governor. Vainovitch joined the clamor of well publicized outrage by Ohio's law enforcement officials and prosecutors at these commutations and vowed to put these prisoners back on death row. Vainovitch, joined by Reginald Williamson, Director of the Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, filed a civil action in the court of Common Pleas for Franklin Country. The lives of these prisoners were now in the hands of Judge Sherwood who was asked to issue a declaratory judgement whether or not Celeste had authority to issue commutations without following administrative procedure by waiting for the Adult Parole Authority (APA) to investigate and issue a recommendation for or against commutation to the Governor.

In the meantime, Maur, Jenkins (who's paralyzed from the waist down and already condemned to life in a wheelchair), Jester and Seiber were removed from death row at the Southern Ohio Correctional Facility (SOCF) and placed in general population as were Grant and Green at the Ohio Reformatory for Women (ORW). Debra Brown was under a death sentence in Indiana. Saram Bellinger and Ralph Deleo were released from prison.

Leonard Jenkins was transferred to Marion Correctional Facility in Marion, OH.

But the public was not to be denied its thirst for blood. On Feb 13/92 Judge Sherwood issued a final order declaring that former Governor Celeste was not vested with constitutional power to issue commutations or pardons without first receiving a full report on the individuals from the APA. It should be noted that the cases had been referred to the APA prior to the commutations for investigation reports but the APA had stonewalled on the report in hopes of delaying until Vainovitch (who is pro death penalty) came into office. It should also be noted that Celeste was not bound by the APA's denial or recommendation of commutation. He could override their decisions.

The prisonrats' response was to transfer Jenkins back to SOCF and place him and the other commuted prisoners back on death row there and at ORW. The State giveth and the State taketh away.

There is a strong argument to be made that commuting a prisoner's death sentence, then reversing the commutation a year after releasing them from death row subjects them to double jeopardy and cruel and unusual punishment. These avenues should be pursued. Meanwhile, Ohio moves one step closer to Barbarism.

Letters of Protest should be sent to:
Governor George Vainovitch
State House — Governor's Mansion
Columbus, Ohio 43216 ∞

Thanks,
John Perotti

Honor Magic Johnson, but remember the rest of us

(This article was inadvertently left out of our last issue.)

The news of Magic Johnson's infection with the AIDS virus has just been publicized. I too have been infected with the virus. Magic Johnson is larger than life "proof" that the virus does not discriminate — does this make Magic Johnson more important and myself and others like me of less importance? The virus causes the deadly disease AIDS — research and a cure have always been a must. Will Magic Johnson's prominence contribute to the clamour for more and better research monies? I sincerely hope so! Yet why has it taken a prominent sports figure of his stature to attain such measures? It saddens me to see/hear of another being "attacked" with this virus, yet it pacifies me in his courage to become public with his diagnosis, even so it can be seen as somewhat tantamount in some circles as "mild hysteria" / "obscene disgust" — how could he? — as if he knew he'd also become a PWA? Again the virus knows no faces, no fame, no money. The virus has no conscience. Abstinence: the call to the reduction in HIV infection and other sexually transmitted diseases. The condom: preventive measures in the spread of the disease. Reality! The HIV virus is here!!!

Treatment is available in prolonging life, treatment is available to fight opportunistic infections associated with the disease — a cure is yet to be found. At least any that has FDA-stamped approval. Profound research must stand as a priority, if only because Magic Johnson, a

revered athlete, now becomes a statistic among those hundreds of thousands infected with the virus. His prominence and stature can demand much needed funds in research and treatments. No longer are we (PWA's) People With AIDS, an anonymous people.

Magic Johnson's public acclamations of infection with the virus brings obscurity to the forefront in combatting this disease — I applaud his stance and admire his courage, for he could have renounced the publicity of such a private issue — I'm proud that he's chosen to be recognized as a PWA, for in his acknowledgement I too can stand and not hide in shame and fear. I had not wanted to include my name in my story other than my initials, assuming anonymity in that fashion, due to the various and many persons it would affect — I've decided that my real name may indeed be used. With family support and a



network of concerned friends, I will survive and live my life positively! For quality time! In existing negatively I've now come to terms with living positively! ∞

Brenda Taylor
1034 Bragg St.
Raleigh, N.C. 27610

The Prison News Service is published bimonthly by PSC Publishers and is edited by the Bulldozer collective.

Subscriptions:
Free to prisoners
non-prisoners \$10./yr.
more if you can, less if you
can t. Send subscription
requests to PSC Publishers
at the address below.

Institutions — \$25./yr.
(payable in U.S. funds
outside of Canada)

Donations are needed to
keep this project going.
Prisoner support groups
can get multiple copies for
use in their work for the
cost of postage.

March/April 1992 issue
Date of issue April 1991
Publications Mail Registration
Number 8843

Postal Officials, send
returns to:

PSC Publishers
POB 5052, Stn A
Toronto, Ont
Canada M5W 1W4

Graphics and articles wel-
comed. Deadline for next
issue is May 20th.

Diss'd

From 1976 through 1984, the Sam Melville-Jonathan Jackson Unit (SMJJ) and the United Freedom Front (UFF) called for the release of political prisoners and POWs from U.S. prisons. This call, accentuated through the use of explosives, was integrated with other issues such as independence for Puerto Rico, an end to apartheid and support for the liberation movements in Central America.

In 1985, the first of many trials began for seven long time activists and revolutionaries. Collectively known as the Ohio 7, the first group trial stemmed from resistance actions attributed to the UFF, including the bombings of U.S. military facilities. This trial resulted in numerous convictions. Subsequently, 8 people were indicted on Sedition and RICO (Racketeer Influenced Corrupt Organization) charges coming out of SMJJ/UFF actions. This case resulted in the longest sedition trial in U.S. history and acquittals for those who remained in the case. I was a defendant in both cases as were Richard Williams and Thomas Manning.

Between the earlier UFF trial and the Sedition case, there was a New Jersey state trial in which Tom and Richard were tried for the 1981 shooting death of a state trooper. In very compelling and unequivocal testimony, Tom described how he had shot the trooper in self-defense after the trooper tried to kill him with his .357 Magnum. During the court proceedings it was determined that the trooper had fired a minimum of 6 shots, carried an unregistered, unlicensed "drop gun" concealed on his person, and was previously involved in shooting incidents.

Tom testified that Richard Williams was not present at the shooting. At the trial's conclusion, Tom Manning was convicted of felony murder. The jury failed to reach a verdict on Richard, with the majority for acquittal. This lead to a second trial, a retrial, which began 5 years later on Sept/30/91, and ended with Richard's conviction in December.

A year earlier, Dec/7-10/90, a Special Tribunal on the violation of the human rights of political prisoners/p.o.w.s in U.S. prisons and jails was held in New York City. This event was convened by 88 sponsoring and endorsing organizations, including Freedom

How is it that one year after the Tribunal findings, the New Jersey trial of Richard Williams elicited no moral or political support from those who organized, sponsored, endorsed and attended this event? Or from the organizations and individuals affiliated with Freedom Now? How did circumstances and attitudes evolve to the point of adding insult to injury by abandoning Richard Williams to a relentless attack by the State?

It has been my position, shared with some of my comrades, that we do not distance ourselves politically from actions claimed by the SMJJ/UFF. For example, we do not deny bombing the offices of the South African government in 1982, or the destruction of military facilities. We think they were necessary and righteous actions designed to draw the attention of the American people to crimes being committed by their own government.

This has had repercussions in our ability to build support among the organized Left and others. Many activists consider the SMJJ/UFF actions "dirty" because they involve the use or threat of violence, including confrontations with the police. These activists won't even consider extending support to those who do not establish their "innocence" or repudiate armed resistance. Trying to gain their favor resembles an appearance before a parole board.

Little support for Williams

At his recent trial, Richard Williams maintained his innocence throughout the circumstantial case against him, yet political and moral support did not materialize. With the exception of a few individuals who braved the elements of police intimidation, the Left virtually boycotted the trial. The alternative press, with the exception of some Canadian Left publications, did not devote so much as a single column inch to the trial. Events were not organized or shared which would draw attention to our comrade's plight. One of the few bright spots in the midst of this wayward stampede was defense attorney Lynne Stewart who put forward a valiant effort.

Why the whiteout? Despite the rhetoric of our detractors, the issue is not one of "guilt" or "innocence". If it were, the courtroom would have been filled with supporters from that nearby hotbed of radicalism, New York City. As it was, the courtroom was filled with

state cops making their own political statement. The real deal with those that renounce us and retreat from trials and prison battlegrounds is that we are seen as anti-imperialists with guns. Guns were used to defend ourselves; guns to confront the enemy; guns that speak for our own liberation and provides support to others. With no apologies.

Self defense was clearly established in the New Jersey case. However, our critics' convoluted logic turns the issue around to a condemnation: what were we doing with guns to begin with? The soft part of the Left filed a superseding indictment behind that of the State, implicating us as terrorists and criminals. The guns, our lack of adherence to a particular party line, our radical ideas (e.g. the liberation of oppressed nations within the borders of the U.S. Empire) are used by others to label the Ohio 7 as renegade workers unworthy of support.

There are those who've just begun to grasp the necessary understanding and courage to denounce the inherent injustice of 20 year-old-cases involving our Black Panther Party and Black Liberation Army comrades, and others. Yet they don't lift a finger to help someone on trial now. Anyone who has been chewed up in this so called "criminal justice"

system will tell you support is most effective in the trial stage. Convictions are extremely difficult to get reversed, and early support lays the foundation for protracted support if necessary. A New York judge put it succinctly when he stated the government has an interest in the finality of judgements. Final — as in bury them alive, or, as in the case of Mumia Abu Jamal, execute as soon as convenient.

Much of the North American left suffers from myopia on this issue of political prisoners. It affects their value judgements. They place our value at nil. They see no relationship or kindred spirit between those who function clandestinely or outside the bounds of the Empire's law, and the combatants, bombmakers, expropriators, armorers, couriers and propagandists of other anti-imperialist struggles. Struggles represented by the FMLN, the FSLN, Umkhonto we Sizwe, the PLA of the Philippines, etc. They merit admiration and respect. We get ostracized and disrespected.

When Mandela toured the U.S. after his release from prison, I watched with pride as millions turned out to welcome him. Nelson Mandela symbolizes anti-apartheid resistance and the defiant spirit of political prisoners. Most left organizations expressed enthusiastic support for Mandela — an appreciation for his sacrifice on behalf of others. It was a very special moment when Mandela spoke in Harlem. Adding to its significance was Mandela sharing the stage and place of honor with Black Panther Party leader Dhoruba Bin Wahad and former Puerto Rican nationalist Prisoners of War. Liberal and conservative poli-

ticians opposed their presence on stage. It is then with some irony that so many Left organizations, year after year, refused to acknowledge the political persecution of these comrades. Curious that many didn't recognize the connection with the struggle against white supremacy in South Africa and the fight against white supremacy in Amerikkka. Disturbing, that at no time prior, during, or after did anyone acknowledge the reality of U.S. political prisoners in prison for years, and still in prison today, for anti-apartheid actions.

Left ignores political prisoners

The consistency with which the Left ignores political prisoners can be seen through the experiences of soldiers who refused to serve in the Gulf War. These working class women and men took the risks, bad discharges and imprisonment. For their commitment and sacrifice, they received scant support from the various anti-war groups and coalitions, with the major exceptions of Citizen Soldier, the War Resisters League and the anti-imperialist segment of the Viet Nam Veterans Against the War.

Exceptional also is the Puerto Rican Independence Movement, and the singular example of Leonard Peltier (also, the particular effort formed around IRA prisoner Joe Doherty). They have made progress with integrating the lives of prisoners with other community and political issues.

However, few prisoners, including anti-imperialist prisoners, receive organizational support. The demise of Freedom Now! from competing agendas, personal squabbling and myriad other self-induced problems undermined the good intentions and hard work of

a few. It dashed the hopes of scores of political prisoners, long ago forgotten. This is a continuation of a decades-old legacy which relegates political prisoners to the status of irritant and minor humanitarian consideration.

Prisoners need and want support

The prisoners want and need outside support. We need it to remain visible and as a vehicle for activism; as a measure of physical protection and to secure our freedom. Our lifeline is perilously weak.

The State put a lot of muscle and resources into prosecuting Richard Williams. Every day, state police ringed the courthouse, patrolled the building and occupied the courtroom. This was more than a symbolic determination — it was a strategy designed to use the power of the State to take a man's



life. The dichotomy was striking: a frenzied police power bent on exacting their pound of flesh, and the wilted response of the Left. There was the depth, character and attitude of each in the context of a political trial.

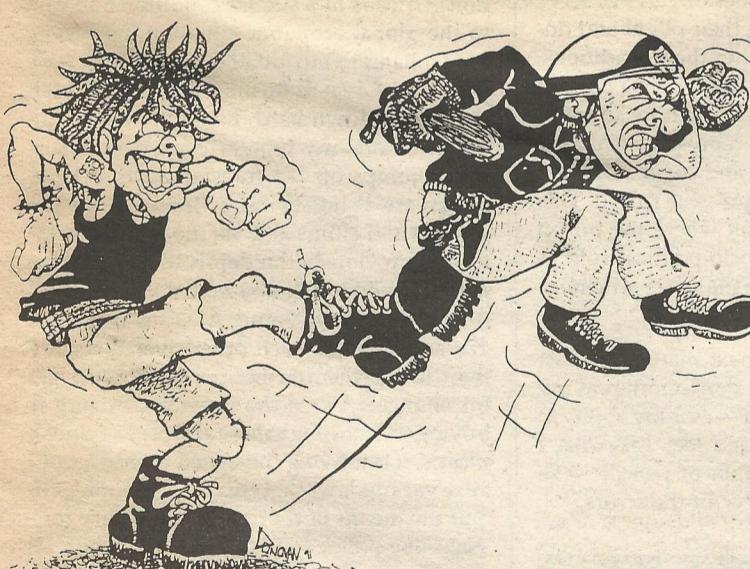
Neither my comrades nor I have asked for awards, promotions or pensions. If that's what I wanted, I would have re-enlisted with the U.S. Army rather than join with the unconventional forces. Some will say I have an axe to grind. No doubt, I began to sharpen my axe under the war skies of Viet Nam 25 years ago. I've continued to hone its edge as my own life was rubbed raw with oppression. With me, the political is personal.

This is not a criticism of the entire Left. Most of the Left doesn't even know we exist. For those who have made a difference in our lives — you know who you are. Neither is it meant to be a comprehensive analysis. My purpose is to stir the conscience and inflame the passions; to draw attention to the inherent weakness of political organizations and movements that cut and run at the first sign of a courtroom confrontation. All progressive and revolutionary movements have their activists and seditious conspirators. Some of us are imprisoned for our commitment. Do you see us as part of your community, or as casualties of a war you'd just as soon forget? Do you see us at all? For after all is said and done, the women and men locked down for their political beliefs, intent and actions are the United States' political prisoners.

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Thanks to Friends of Political Prisoners for sending us this article. Write them at:

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Now!, a coalition of organizations and individuals pledged to support political prisoners. Hundreds of activists attended the event. The Tribunal provided an opportunity and forum to examine the political claims and conditions of over 100 political prisoners. Examination was also given to government claims that these prisoners are simply terrorists and criminals.

The Tribunal drew numerous conclusions based on the evidence. Among these findings: U.S. prisons hold substantial numbers of political prisoners/p.o.w.s, including "white north american opponents of U.S. government policies." The Tribunal then issued the following call to action — "It is of critical importance for the international human rights community as well as all freedom-loving people to bring world-wide attention to the plight of U.S. political prisoners."

The Prison Situation in the United States

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

There are three basic approaches to analyzing the prison situation inside the Shaytan-i-Buzurg (Great Satan): individual or personal, domestic or national, and in relation to the global or international world order. As the last two are interlinked (at least from a "conscious" view of political affairs, etc.) I don't really separate them one from the other. What is known as "crime" is not cut off from the socio-political and economic realities of the U.S., which are in turn products of the international crisis U.S. imperialism presently faces; hence, the interlinking connection. Beseeching the Almighty, I hope to touch on these various aspects and areas.

Most young people of this land, particularly those from among the *mustazaf* (deprived Black and white people) are suffering from a terrible identity crisis. They know neither their Creator nor their "self", and their socio-cultural awareness remains for the most part, only skin deep—lacking sound historical (or even geographical) background and insight. On top of all of this, they labor under the burden of a value system which is fundamentally against their nature as human beings and wholly inadequate vis-a-vis enabling them to coexist harmoniously with their fellow human beings. I am sure that you are aware of the "void" in the hearts of the citizens of Shaytan-i-Buzurg (i.e. the hollowness of the so-called "civilization" of the West...) so I won't dwell on this—only to say that it is a big factor in the criminal behavior of the youth. This "void" has been filled for today's people but by a mirage (i.e. the illusion of money as a value system) instead of by anything of substance! Via the institutions of influence, the media, the school systems and so forth, people are conditioned to equate wealth with status and well-being—while taught that this "well-being" is available to everyone (here in the good old U.S.A.) who will merely apply themselves to study and hard work. We can liken this to a religion: money is the "god", study and hard work are the methods of worship and prosperity (i.e. the more material possessions one can acquire) the sign of earning the good pleasure of the "divine". The Protestant Ethic laid the foundations of this creed and the capitalist system supplanted money for the god-concept of Christianity (although the outward trappings and symbolism of Christianity are still maintained as a facade to hide reality.)

Possessions equated with divine pleasure

Now the vast majority of young people in this society, when conditioned to equate money and material possessions with divine good pleasure—and finding themselves without access to either, develop an inferiority complex of sorts. This develops into a rejection of the "good Christian" role model, adopting some sort of rebellious life activities and/or searching for a substitute "god" to give them self-worth. In this rejectionist attitude, the deprived receive subtle guidance through the influences of the media (TV and music/video industries) so as to have their anger, hostility and quest channeled into "safe" (beneficial and non-threatening) lifestyles vis-a-vis the status quo. The status quo requires that the deprived be kept ignorant and preoccupied with self-destructive activities, as knowledge connotes awakening to oppression and exploitation and in the context of the socio-economic realities of the U.S., self-betterment and the rechanneling of one's potentials and produce away from embellishing the palaces of the elite to provide for the basic needs of self, directly connotes revolutionary struggle. In light of this, immorality (sexual promiscuity ruptures the family life), drugs (intoxication ruins the mind, heart and soul of the individual), and violence/crime (violence overtakes the faculty of rational thinking vis-a-vis one resolving personal problems and crime places you in the hands of the

state—in most cases for a lifetime) are all portrayed in a way that subtly induces the deprived to find self-expression and a twisted sense of self-worth within this trinitarian counter-culture of vice.

Of course, this process does not take place through individuals consciously deciding to literally destroy themselves, their humanity and God-given potentials by emulating the destructive, counter-culture lifestyles—but instead, I would say that it is something of a dialectical balancing out of values versus socio-economic realities, synthesized along balancing points which have been carefully thought out and set up by the "think tanks" of the Shaytan-i-Buzurg. Reflect on the Quran (34:31-33) which alludes to such scheming by the arrogant vis-a-vis the deprived.

So what is the end result??? We are witnessing it today on a grand scale—millions of young people engaged in plunder and banditry (as a way of living!) wholly devoid of human sentiments and with no respect whatsoever for human life. It may seem difficult to grasp how this actually helps *taghut* (i.e. the corrupt system) but actually it does in a great many ways which I will, *insha' Allah*, touch on as I proceed.

Prison, in most cases, comes into one's personal experience in the above context. Most of those coming in to prison are quite young (16 yrs to 25 yrs), first offenders with crimes ranging from car theft to burglary, from robbery to murder and just about everything in between; all with the common factor that just about everybody is receiving the maximum sentence for these crimes...which amounts to averages of 40 yrs to 90 yrs! Prison is a very controlled environment, with a myriad of rules designed to give the captors maximum control over the confined. At the same time all rules and laws designed to protect the basic rights of the prisoners are subject to expediency and from my personal experience, the prison administrators have never found it expedient to follow any of the rules and laws which allow prisoners to liberate themselves from the '24-24' regime of oppression—be it in any sense or regard! I will spare you the diatribe against the bad food, foul air, exploitation, poor medical treatment, night sticks, stun guns, wooden bullets, water hoses and attack dogs we are subjected to, beaten down and brutalized with daily inside these prisons all across the US.—which I'm assuming comes to mind when one ponders the view of prison life from the eyes of those enslaved. And, dear readers, I use the word enslaved to avoid subjecting you to what I believe is called "news-speak" (i.e. calling nuclear rockets armed with warheads of mass destruction "peacekeepers", etc. etc.)...the words "inmate", "resident", "offender" and their like belie the fact that per the U.S. Constitution and per most almost State Constitutions, imprisonment is equated to slavery; hence we are prisoners of the state, modern chattel! At any rate, we are subjected to a lot of nonsense and brutality, literal violence and the level of brutality increases as one's level of awareness

(hence resistance!!!) to one's plight increases. Most deprived peoples, given their mental state and socio-economic conditions do not go to high school—let alone college! So the mind (and inner person) never gets any type of food that would enable it to grow into awareness of the dimensions of the oppressive realities one is subjected to in this country (or to rid one of the idols of Americanism which have so carefully been set up within one's heart)...hence people come to prison totally blind, deaf and dumb! However, in these prisons one will quickly hear discussions of matters that force one to ponder life beyond simply the terms of drugs, sex/lust and musical entertainment.

Slave camps become centers of awareness

In other words, we have (*al-hamd Allah*) turned these slave camps into centers of revolutionary activity and awareness. So while the deprived are cut off from knowledge (on the streets)—when they come into these camps they are being awakened and I think you might be surprised to know the extent of the awakening going on behind these prison walls! In fact, I have read some FBI documents and also a report by the Zionist ADL bemoaning the awakening of the deprived behind the prison walls of the U.S. jails and prisons and calling for ways and means to stop the flow of revolutionary ideas from prison to society at large. Behind these fears, beginning in the mid-1980s the arrogant (*taghuti*) government instructed the prison administrators to construct special "control units" (designed along the lines of the units built in West Germany in the 60s and 70s to house the Baader-Meinhoff/Red Army Fraction guerrillas) to contain and control those aware ones who are trying to wake the deprived from their slumber. It is in this context that the Indiana Department of Corrections built its new M.C.C. (Supermax) unit where the brothers on hunger strike are now located.

Throughout this country, behind these prison walls there is a deepening cycle of resistance and repression—more and more men and women are streaming into these camps, most with lifetimes of years to serve and once here, realizing their plight and doing what they can to better their conditions; and as the programs of *taghut* doesn't afford for this, we are being met with lockdowns, transfers, beatings and repressive brutality (which become excuses and covers for even more restrictive and oppressive rules!). This is, I would say, the point where the prison situation assumes its socio-political role as merely one dimension in the larger scheme of the Great Satan.

In touching these next matters, I must ask your pardon for any shortcomings as my understanding is limited—as is my ability to articulate what I think and feel. Likewise, I am writing with little stubs of pencils—so my apologies, in advance, for the errors.



One of the planks of the American mythology is the invincibility and "static" power of the U.S. However, like the remainder of this mythology—this plank is a lie and flies in the face of reality. Presently, U.S. imperialism is being challenged (and defeated!) in a very real way by the countless struggles the world over who have resolved to undertake revolutionary action to rectify their plight and use their resources and human potentials for their self-improvement (as opposed to enriching the IMF bankers and the multinational corporations). This global so-called "low-intensity conflict" is literally strangling the U.S. empire of its lifeblood resources. Of course the Shaytan-i-Buzurg knows this is destroying its economic stability and it is also aware of the fact that its neo-colonial global structure (i.e. the Nixon-Kissinger Doctrine—Vietnamization of low-intensity conflicts to avoid U.S. intervention in the long, drawn-out guerrilla wars) has failed terribly, albeit causing the slaughter, starvation, impoverishment and terrorization of hundreds of millions of people and can't stop the *mustazafin fil arz* (deprived of the earth) from longing for and fighting for a better life. In fact, repression carried out against the *mustazafin fil arz* has—in almost every case—increased the masses' determination to struggle and sacrifice! This failure to stop the drainage of their lifeblood as well as the rise of new powers—such as Japan and Europe (not to mention the rise of Islam as a socio-political force in the global scene) requires a change in the policy of U.S. imperialism, from rule by puppet tyrants shored up by neo-colonial armies to rule by U.S. administrators (under cover of the U.N.) or U.S. puppets, backed by the direct intervention of U.S. troops. We can witness this trend in the U.S. acts against Libya, Panama and Iraq..., and also in the *taghut* Bush gleefully declares that the "Vietnam syndrome" is over (ponder the implications of such words!). The level of slaughter and violence which the "New World Order" will require will make the last World War look like child's play! To create and sustain the "attitude" and forces necessary for such an endeavor will require a complete restructuring of the U.S. domestic scene.

U.S. Empire in trouble

Domestically the U.S. Empire is in trouble. The deprived Africans are terribly impoverished. There are millions of deprived non-Africans in a similar condition and due to the global economic situation, no means are on hand to buy off and pacify these people. So the Great Satan must put its foot down and put it down hard, hopefully (to its designs) before any type of large-scale insurgency jumps off. To forestall such a thing, drugs are being literally flooded into the ghettos and slums and via the process mentioned previously, the deprived peoples are being incited to self-abasement and vice...all the better to have young Africans using AK 47s and Uzis on each other over nonsense than turning them on the oppressor to struggle for change! While the Shaytan-i-Buzurg is buying time through these and other devilish means, it is moving full-speed to institutionalize various laws that create opportunities to put the means of repression, necessary for a Nazi-like police state in place and ready for use. Do you know that presently by law police can board any means of public/pay transportation and walk down the isles demanding ID and to look into your luggage or that they can beat (coerce—to put it nicely) a confession out of you and use it against you in court. They can enter your home—without a warrant—and find something "illegal" and take you to jail for it. They can set up roadblocks on any road or highway, stop you at them and demand an ID, etc. and a breath check. They can jail you and hold you without bail until you either go to prison or are found "not guilty"...all merely on an "assertion" by the State's attorney. And the list goes on and on...all these police state laws were recently put into effect (by the rulings of the U.S. Supreme Court) in just the last few years.

This is where the crime issue (and prisons) tie in. To restructure U.S. society per the

continued on next page

needs of the imperial "New World Order", the taghut need to have the loyalty of the people (particularly the middle-class whites!) and it also must assume the role of the protector of the people. The old wrap-the-devil-in-the-flag game — and the tough, patriotic rhetoric of the taghut, played up by the media etc, serves to shore up the loyalty to taghut (by way of identifying it with the myth of "America the Great") This is not a difficult thing to do — due to the blinding ignorance of most U.S. citizens vis-a-vis the "American the Great" thing. But the second matter requires more scheming because the end objective is to take away the people's rights and set the stage to use the whites to repress the Blacks and poor people.

Genocide and rebellion

For the U.S. government to say "give us all your rights, we need you to do mean and ungodly — genocidal — things to Blacks and to go where we say to go and kill who we say to kill, would cause some rather rebellious tendencies to develop among whites as well as to give clear warning to the deprived (white and Black) that "the monster is alive and well — and planning a very nasty future for us!" So they must use some other means! Crime has become the means. While traffic accidents (and U.S. wars) cause more deaths than "crimes", and while white-collar crime costs ten times more than street crime — it is street crime which is publicized to such a degree that the average U.S. citizen feels threatened by crime — directly under attack. Crime is definitely a reality, but the method of coverage doesn't focus on the causes/solutions...only the acts! In particular, it is significant that Africans are projected as criminals. Now once the people are in fear of something, they come to support the destruction of the object causing the fear. The taghut sets itself up as the protector of the people vis-a-vis this threatening element and they give it just about free hand to do what it wants. Knowing this, the taghut is using the guise of fighting crime (or the "war on drugs") to get more and more police into place with more and more power over the people.

We, inside these prisons, are like the communists of pre-World War 2 Germany. The Nazis used the fear of communism to mobilize people and get various institutions into place. The communists were identified with Jews, but before the institutions (laws!) of repression were in place — the Jews couldn't be rounded up. But by using the communists, they were able to get the institutions established — and the mentality of the Germans conditioned to such a degree that enabled them to "rationalize" the literal extermination of the communists. Once the ball got rolling, it was no problem to then get the Jews (along with any Germans who were not with the program)...once the Jews had been used to unify the Nazis with the German people, all of the racial hatred and energy was turned to conquest and empire-building! Parallel to this country (historically!) and look carefully at what is actually going on (and why?!). I think you will find some shocking similarities!

Realistically — don't look for Nazi swastikas because it will not be exactly the same (they will fly crosses and/or U.S. flags!) — but the basic means of using a feared group ("criminals") to set the stage for a large scale round-up and the repression of a group which is hated (Blacks) — to mobilize a warmongering, racial tendency among whites, which can be used to restructure the U.S. domestically and more importantly to create an imperial force to build the "New World Order," will be very similar to what the Nazis did in Germany. Ponder this!

In summary, let me say, we are presently being brutalized and oppressed to a heightened degree in these jails and prisons. The vast majority of the repression we are being subjected to is being done under color of law and hence we are left with very few means of resolving our dilemma save for struggle by any and all means necessary. Our oppression is in direct relation to the domestic and international realities of the dying U.S. imperial world order (hence our struggles are linked

to those fighting this world order of oppression). The issue of crime (criminals and prisons) is being manipulated to provide cover for the institutionalization of fascist, repressive practices of police vis-a-vis the populace, as well as to dehumanize and criminalize segments of U.S. society which have a high potential for insurgency and upheaval — and hence are being slated for genocidal suppression, round-up and control. This last aspect is nothing "far-fetched" but, to the contrary, has been put forward by the Rockefeller Commission as far back as the late 1960s — refined under the code name "King Alfred Plan" in the 1970s (at which time the U.S. police were restructured to handle this eventually by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and were militarized and trained by the U.S. Army under the "Cable-Splicer" programs according to these designs) and finally signed into Executive Order by Reagan in 1984 ("Rex '84"). I think that it is in this overall context that the prison situation inside the U.S. should be understood. Yes — as in all societies there is crime in the U.S. and this crime is a stark reality! However, this crime has dimensions beyond

just the individual violating the law (and norms of human conduct) and as the personal/individual aspects are projected daily, I have chosen to try to highlight the dimensions which are generally not known, projected in the media or thought about (but — in my view — are of much greater significance).

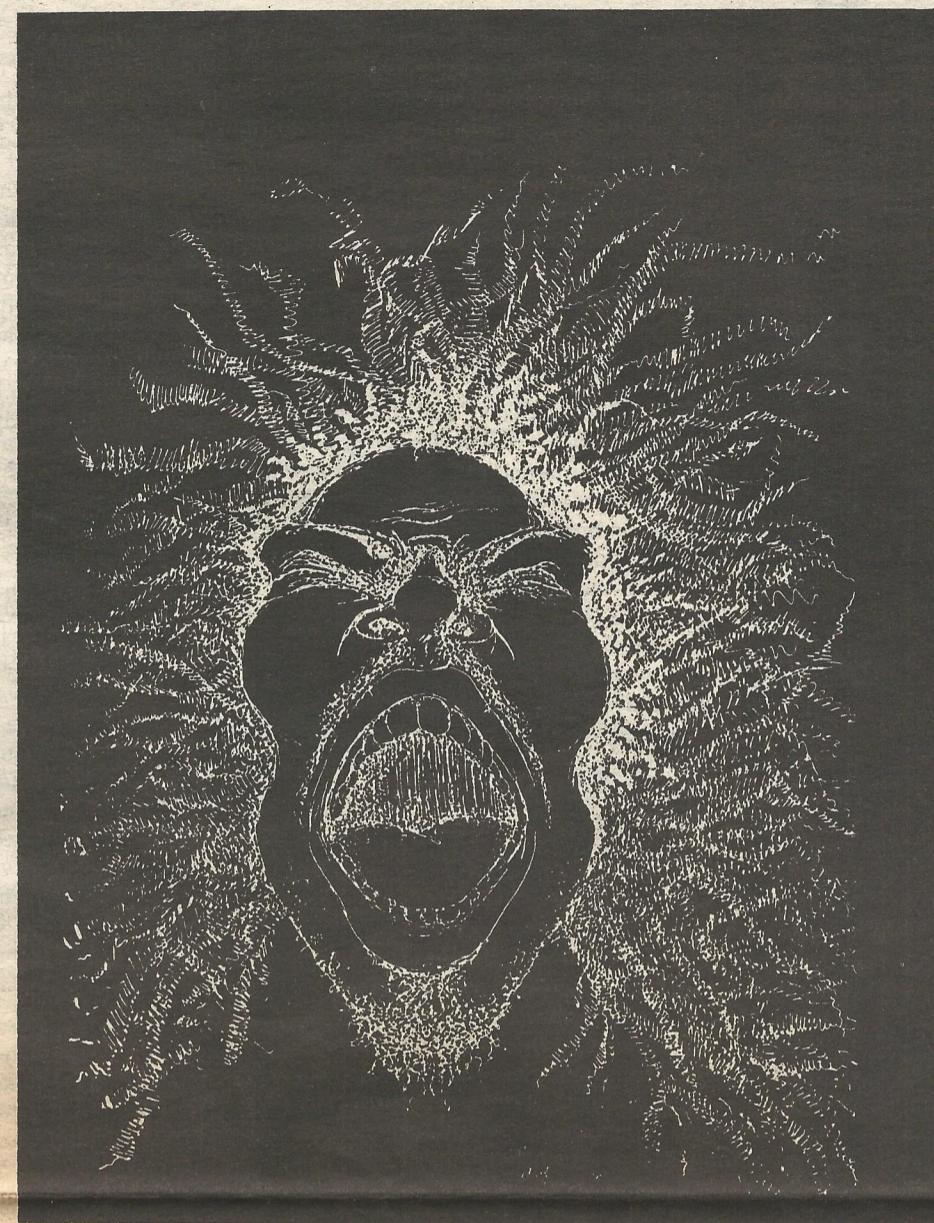
I hope that this will give the reader something to think about. If any of you desire more in-depth information or examples on the particulars of our repression, I can get case laws xeroxed which set out various laws recently passed and (insha' Allah) point out how they affect us and are used against us. You may not

realize it but whatever is passed as a law, even though it is against us (in prison) also applies to you and everyone else in the U.S.! Most people don't know/understand this — so they have no objections to more repressive laws being put on the books to constrain and contain those of us behind prison walls. The type of torture and state repression of SAVAK (or similar to that in Chile, etc.) is only a few years around the corner...then it will be lucid to all (i.e. the implications of these laws), but may be too late to do much about it!?

This article may seem a bit pessimistic — but that is only because I've been trying to focus on the schemings of the taghut and not on what can, must and will (insha' Allah) be done by the deprived upon the earth to realize and find themselves and their destiny in Islam and truly Allah protects the good. And this will have to wait for some other time (insha' Allah).

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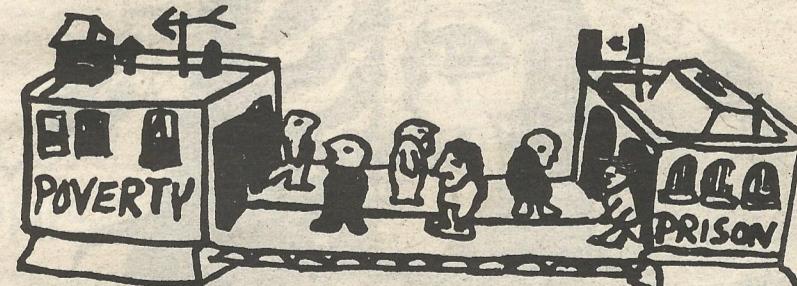
The "Criminal" Justice System Or Who says crime doesn't pay?

No one in their right mind would dare to argue intelligently that the criminal justice system works. It doesn't and that's a well known fact. Harsh laws are enacted and mandatory prison sentences imposed as deterrents to crime. They don't. Survival is an intrinsic part of human nature, and economically underprivileged people, who make up the vast majority of prison populations, will invariably resort to crime for survival. It is simply, for most, a matter of economics.

Contrary to what the name implies, "Correctional" institutions are not designed to "correct" anything. The sole purpose of imprisonment is to punish, and that it does indiscriminately. Over half of the prisoners in New York State are non-violent offenders, whose only crime was trying to make a living in a society where affluence is reserved only for the privileged few. Where are the options for economically depressed minorities when good paying jobs are virtually non-existent? Most of these people turn to crime because for them there are no viable options.

Ultimately, they wind up in prison where the hate and resentment towards a system indifferent to their needs builds and is reinforced. Eventually, they are returned to freedom and expected to function as "contributing members of society" when in actuality, there is no place for them in society, other than in the ghettos and on the welfare rolls. The economic problems

still exist, only now the offender is further burdened with the stigma of being a convicted felon. Moreover, the rigid parole restrictions imposed on newly released prisoners ensure a high rate of recidivism; miss an appointment, move without notification, having a beer, being seen with the wrong people, etc. All these and more will ultimately lead to re-imprisonment, even though the parolee has committed no additional crime!



Clearly then, the criminal Justice System and its affiliates can be seen for what it really is: a self-perpetuating political machine designed under the auspices of fighting crime while ensuring its existence.

Who benefits from the multi-billion dollar expenditures? Certainly not the criminals themselves, nor the taxpayers or society in general (although there are those naive enough to believe that their streets

are somehow safer, despite statistics that prove otherwise. There can only be one answer as to who the beneficiaries are: the Departmental officials, the judges, district attorneys, lawyers, bailiffs, prison commissioners, wardens, guards, parole personnel, etc. Ask any one of these people if crime doesn't pay.

Half the people in prisons across the state of New York don't need to be there, and the money needlessly spent warehousing them in overcrowded prisons could be better spent on adequate housing for the poor. Obviously the state of N.Y. has made it clear that the only expenditures it is willing to make in housing for the poor is through the Department of Corrections. The sad truth is that these facts

are well known by everyone involved in the criminal justice system, from the governor on down, and the real crime is that they are able, but unwilling to correct it. ::

Christine Wills # 89 G 22
Albion Correctional Facility
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Albion, NY 14411

Indian prisoners struggle for religious freedom

I've fought this fight alone about as far as I can go. I can't go no further without some kind of help. The laws of America just don't work, and they never will until the people make them work. The only way I know of for that to happen is through publicity. Let all the world know that they have political prisoners in Oklahoma prisons...

We have to keep the attitude that we're fighting for the rights of our children or we're going to lose the fight. Indians have a right to be safe in Oklahoma (and elsewhere) in their rights like other peoples. But it'll never happen until we all learn to stand up and be counted. We can't complain about other people's fears until we learn to face our own. I was born an Indian and I intend to die one. Hopefully, that will be a long time from now. But I have no intentions of surrendering my rights as an Indian — surrendering my rights to no tyrannical clique of corrupt politicians and guards. I have no intentions of becoming like them. And I sure don't want to cut my hair so that I'll look like them, Adolph Hitler, or any other of their kind. Hopefully, more will learn to stand as human beings. Bowing our heads to a king won't get us any place or nothing except to set an example for our children to follow as slaves. My children are destined to be free!"

Martin Hedgpath (Cherokee)
Political Prisoner in Oklahoma
December 1991

Le'ts take a look at some of the states that are named after Indian people, starting with Missouri. At the Farmington Correctional Center in Missouri, on two separate occasions, a gang of prison guards giggled insanely as they held a Lakota brother, Bob Iron Eyes, to the ground and cut off his hair. The only reason they did it is because they wanted to humiliate the brother, and to show him

that no "wild Indians" will practice their heathen ways in their prison. When Bob later sued the officials for forcibly cutting his hair in violation of his sincerely held religious beliefs, they had to make up some good excuses for their brutality, so they told the court that they cut Bob's hair off for security reasons. They told the judge that they did it because long hair enables prisoners to conceal contraband, and that long hair makes it difficult to maintain the identities of prisoners. It sounded good enough to the federal district judge, so he dismissed the lawsuit. When Bob appealed the decision to the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals, *Iron Eyes v Henry*, 907 F.2d 810 (8th Cir. 1990), the court noted that Iron Eyes had argued that contraband had never been found in any prisoner's long hair, and the prison officials did not refute this or produce any evidence to the contrary. Moreover, the court stated:

Iron Eyes argues that...he was never photographed with short hair, despite the fact that his hair was forcibly cut twice while incarcerated. We cannot deny the strength of Iron Eyes' argument here. If identification concerns are so important for security, it is incredulous that the prison officials, after forcibly cutting Iron Eyes' hair, failed to photograph him.

What is even more incredulous is the fact that the court ruled in favor of the prison officials anyway. And now another brother, Steven (Greywolf) Kemp, has

recently lost a similar suit in the same prison. This time the Eighth Circuit Court affirmed the district court's decision to dismiss two issues: the issue of long hair, and the issue of the sweat lodge. The sweat lodge was given absolutely no consideration by either of the courts, but the hair issue was briefly discussed. Simply put, the court held that the decision in Iron Eyes' case required them to make the same decision this time. In his concurring opinion, Senior Circuit Judge Heaney wrote:

I concur only because our opinion in *Iron Eyes* leaves me no other alternative... This case is even stronger than *Iron Eyes*. Here, Stephen Kemp, a member of the Chickasaw Indian Nation, was permitted to wear his hair long at the [maximum security] Missouri State penitentiary [for over four years]. It was only after he was transferred to the Farmington Correctional Center that the director of that facility told Kemp he had to have his hair cut. No rational reason has been advanced as to why it was permissible to wear long hair in the Missouri State Penitentiary but not at the Farmington Correctional Center, even though the former is a more secure prison than the latter.

This case smacks of harassment and religious persecution to me... The sooner our court *en banc* considers this question and resolves to do away with the penological myth [about security] that the director of this institution perpetuates, the better.

What is really incredulous is that the court has refused to re-hear the case *en banc*, and that Judge Heaney actually concurred with such an opinion as that! It is our hope that the U.S. Supreme Court will grant *certiorari* and resolve the issues once and for all. The Native American Prisoners' Rehabilitation Research Project (NAPRRP) has prepared a petition for writ of *certiorari* on behalf of Greywolf. It is a complex and lengthy brief, but the highlights are as follows:

We have carefully reviewed every published case (and numerous unpublished cases) in the United States where the courts have upheld prison officials' forcible cutting of prisoners' hair in violation of sincerely held religious beliefs. All the cases have one thing in common: to this day, not one prison official in the country has ever produced any evidence that the wearing of long hair has ever caused problems with the maintenance of security, safety, health or identification of prisoners. In every case that the prisoners have lost on the hair issue, the courts have ignored all the evidence except for the "expert" opinions of the prison official-defendants to the effect that they "feel" that long hair might cause problems.

We have conducted a survey which reveals that over 70% of the prison systems in the U.S. allow male prisoners to wear long hair for religious purposes or as a matter of personal preference, and that the experience of these prison officials is similar to the experience of Secretary of Corrections for the State of New Mexico who in 1986 stated that, "sweat lodges and long hair have been in our system for ten years and they haven't been a problem."

We have conducted a survey which reveals that the sweat lodge is the central component of the religious programming for Indian prisoners in prisons (including many maximum security and death row prisoners) in the Federal Bureau of Prisons and at least twenty state prison systems. In 1986, when asked if the sweat lodge poses a security problem at the maximum security New Mexico Penitentiary, George E.

Sullivan, then warden (and a 30-year veteran of the Oregon prison system), replied:

"I can't believe you're asking me this question. Fifteen years ago [20 years now] we allowed our first sweat and it was the most valuable, least offensive problem for administrators of anything we do... There is no problem and everything to be gained... I can guarantee you that [any prison officials who are opposed to the sweat lodge on the grounds of "security"] have conjured ghosts in closets. There's no merit, no substance to [their security claims]. All they have to do is contact their fellow professionals across the country to learn that."

Indeed, many of their fellow professionals across the country have made statements similar to that of Mr. Sullivan. Many prison wardens have discovered that allowing Indian prisoners to practice their religious beliefs has lowered rates of disciplinary action, reduced recidivism rates, improved prisoner attitude, and advanced the rehabilitation process.

Nevertheless, most courts uphold prison officials' prohibition on Indian religious practices as a matter of course, and this is why we hope the U.S. Supreme Court will grant *certiorari* and consider the issues once and for all. We believe we can prevail if given the chance to present the case, for the Supreme Court has ruled on several occasions that "the policies followed at other well-run institutions would be relevant to a determination of the need for a particular type of restriction." *Procurier v Martinez*, 416 U.S. 396, 414, n. 14 (1974). And the Court stated in *Bell v Wolfish*, 99 S. Ct. 1879 (1979): "We further observe that, on occasion, prison administrators may be "experts" only by Act of Congress or of a state legislature." And this fact is blatantly obvious in every published decision relating to Indian religious practices in the prisons. But let's look at a couple of other states named after Indian people.

Oklahoma. In a class action suit brought by Ben Carnes, a Choctaw at the Oklahoma State Penitentiary in the mid-1980s, it was determined that there should be an exemption to the short-hair policy for prisoners whose sincerely held religious beliefs include the wearing of long hair. The penitentiary warden, Gary Maynard, came up with the exemption clause in order to avoid an adverse decision in the case because he admitted in testimony that the wearing of long hair presents no real problem for security or identification of prisoners. Well, over the years, the Oklahoma prison officials have been refusing to grant exemptions to Indian prisoners, and a few months ago the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the





and yet American Indian traditional religion is against the law at the Oklahoma State Penitentiary. Indians are welcomed with open arms as long as they are Christians. They are provided with Bibles, free Bible courses, religious books, crosses, crucifixes and medals of Christian saints, preachers and church services. But if an Indian worships in the way of his grandfathers his religious beliefs are trampled upon and disrespected and every aspect of his religion is banned. And now even the hair on his head which connects him to the Creator is shorn from his head by brute force."

The prison chaplain, Jack Hawkins, has refused to accept correspondence from Indian organizations including the NAPRRP who have written with hopes of working the matters out. He has refused to allow any traditional Indian spiritual advisors to enter the walls for religious services, telling them in correspondence basically to just go away and leave him alone, that security considerations render it impossible to let Indians practice anything but Christianity. And while he's writing this kind of letter to traditional spiritual advisors who want to tend to the spiritual needs of the Indian prisoners, he writes this to Standing Deer:

"I have been working with two Native American organizations in an effort to get a Native American non-Christian spiritualist for service at Oklahoma State Penitentiary. I have not been able to accomplish that to date. I am continuing those efforts.

"My information in discussing traditional religion with the leaders of the Five Civilized Tribes in Oklahoma is that traditionally their religion is Christian. This has been presented by each leader I have discussed the issue with. Further, they have not been able to provide any information concerning the type of religious leader you desire."

It would be interesting to find out who these tribal "leaders" are that the good chaplain speaks of, but it doesn't look like he wants to

prison officials' approach to determining to deny religious exemption is unconstitutional. The reaction of Gary (Scissorhands) Maynard, who has since been promoted from OSP Warden to Director of the Oklahoma Department of Corrections, was to completely abolish the exemption clause — citing as justification for the action the decision of the Eighth Circuit in the case of *Bob Iron Eyes v. Henry* (you know, the "incredulous" one)! Maynard has now issued a state-wide policy that prohibits anyone from wearing long hair (except for female prisoners, of course, but it wouldn't be convenient for any prison official or judge to consider the security issues with respect to the wearing of long hair by females, because the white man agrees that it is fashionable for females to wear long hair: makes 'em look prettier; therefore, security and identification issues can be ignored for the women.) The new policy states that all prisoners who have previously been granted religious exemptions must have their heads shaved. Meanwhile, as Standing Deer Wilson, (the bro hired by the feds to assassinate Leonard Peltier) an Oneida-Choctaw brother in the Oklahoma State Penitentiary, writes:

"There are more Indians in Oklahoma than in any other state except California,

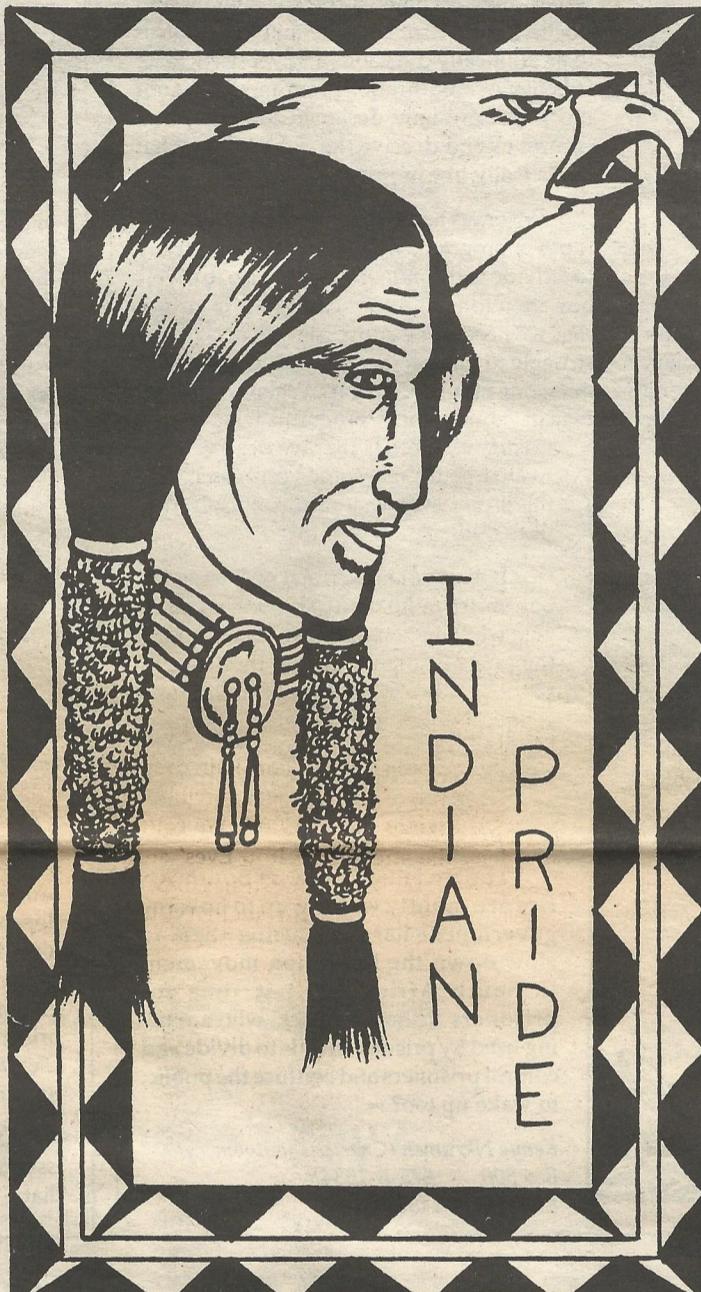
disclose that information at this time. Maybe one of those "leaders" is Hugh Gibbs, the fraudulent Indian chief of a nonexistent Indian tribe who has testified as an "expert" on Lakota and Cherokee religion on behalf of the Ohio Department of Corrections in order to suppress Indian religious freedom in Ohio's prisons. Hugh Gibbs makes a fine "expert" for the government. He's the "Principal Chief of the Etowah Cherokee nation," according to his expert testimony. It must be true, because he also serves as the "authentic Indian advisor" for the Ohio Historical Society. Whenever they dig up Indian graves, they just call on ol' Hugh the Chief, and he'll endorse it because we Indians are thankful to the grave diggers who help us learn our

history and where we came from. Thanks to Hugh Gibbs, Indian prisoners in Ohio, Michigan, Kentucky, and Tennessee can have their hair forcibly cut because, according to Chief Gibbs' expert testimony, long hair has not been held sacred to Indian people since the 1820s; or at least it hasn't been a "bona fide" religious practice of the Cherokees since then. And Chief Gibbs ought to know, because he's a medicine man, and if you pay him the right amount of money, he'll make you one too. He'll also let you enroll in his Etowah Cherokee Nation.

Another state named for Indians: Alabama. Indian religion is treated the same in Alabama as it is in Oklahoma. I have a statement here, signed by fourteen prisoners who assert that they personally saw the prison chaplain at the Saint Claire Correctional Facility order a Cherokee prisoner to sign a paper agreeing to change his religious preference because Indian religion is not recognized there. According to the 14 prisoners who signed the statement, because the Cherokee prisoner refused to sign the paper, eight prison guards, including a lieutenant and two sergeants "in full riot gear entered [the brother's] cell and beat him for about ten minutes," and then put handcuffs and leg irons on him and "dragged him out of the block." While he was out of the block, the 14 witnesses saw four guards enter the brother's cell and destroy all his property. "The officers stripped [the brother's] cell, took bed and all, and placed [him] back [in] his cell." Yup. The prison officials in Alabama appear to be pretty serious about Indian religion.

Little Rock Reed

Reprinted from the Iron House Drum, First Quarter 1992, a quarterly newsletter by and for Native prisoners and their loved ones across North America. Published by the Native American Prisoners' Rehabilitation Research Project (NAPRRP), 2848 Paddock Lane, Villa Hills, KY 41017.oo



Strength from ancestry, current activism covered in First Nations publications

Oh-Toh-Kin means "strength from our ancestry" in Kwa'kwala. It is also the name of a new publication that draws its strength not only from ancestry but from the last twenty years. The first issue is an impressively packed twenty pages covering the Lubicon Cree-initiated boycott of Daishowa, updates and discussion of the Mohawk trials from the Oka standoff, analysis of the water diversion schemes and Peigan resistance, and interviews and historical articles aimed at putting into context the "500 years of Indigenous resistance" campaign. As the opening article states, "...colonization and genocide didn't end 500, or 200, or 20 years ago; it continues at this very moment throughout the Americas, as does Indigenous resistance. Organizing ... against the 'celebrations' of the invasion of the Americas cannot be a substitute for the struggles that continue today."

The struggles taking place in Canada are perhaps getting a little more press these days, since the New York-Quebec

Hydro deal fell through, thanks to James Bay Cree activism. But only through more thorough analysis such as offered in this publication do we start to get the big picture: evidently the Kanesatake Pines that the Mohawk defended are part of the James Bay II scheme. Less wonder then that the governments went to more trouble than one would expect over a golf course.

The next issue of Oh-Toh-Kin will focus on Native Prisoners (see sidebar). Write:

Oh-Toh-Kin Publications,
POB 2881
Vancouver, BC, V6B 3X4.

Sample copy \$2, subscriptions \$10/4 issues individual, \$20 organizations and libraries. Free to prisoners on request.

Another publication, Beedaudjimowin, is in its second year and growing strong. Native-run and produced in Toronto, it now distributes 10,000 copies across the country. Of particular current interest is the Spring 1992 coverage of the

Native Women's Association challenge to both the Canadian government and the male Indian leadership to include them in the constitutional talks now taking place. The NWAC states that "there is a clash between collective rights of sovereign Aboriginal governments and individual rights of women" and cite family violence, incest, and rape as issues the

male leadership has yet to deal with. Beedaudjimowin has been an effective supporter of the Leonard Peltier Canadian Defense Committee, the struggles of the Lubicon Cree and Innu people, among others. Write:

Beedaudjimowin
512 Lansdowne Ave., Suite 12,
Toronto, Ontario M6H 3Y3 ~

A CALL TO NATIVE PRISONERS

As part of the 500 Years of Indigenous Resistance Campaign, and the need to build solidarity with Native prisoners and POWs, the next issue of Oh-Toh-Kin will focus on Native men and women in the prisons. This special issue will be directed towards Prison Justice Day, August 10. Please send submission of articles, art, poetry etc. by June 30, 1992.

OH-TOH-KIN
PO Box 2881
Vancouver BC,
V6B 3X4



Divide and Conquer in Prison

In racist South Africa the government is constantly coming up with ploys designed to "divide and conquer" the oppressed masses in that country. Their favorite tactic is to take a certain group from within the masses and give them a "new status" that is different (in theory) from the masses. This new status usually entails various privileges that are not afforded the masses. As has been proven, the group with the new status and privileges will eventually begin to think that they are different and better than the masses from which they originally came, and because they believe they have more to risk losing (materially) than the masses, will be reluctant to participate in demonstrations, protests and other activities aimed at defeating apartheid and setting up a truly free and democratic government.

This ploy is extremely effective in South Africa and it works well in prison too. Prison officials use the same tactic when they want to divide and conquer prisoners. One very effective way prison officials have been able to do this is through the creation of what is commonly referred to as "honor blocks". In prison the honor block is preserved for so-called "good inmates". To get in the honor block one must normally be in the prison for several months with no serious disciplinary problems. Honor block gives the prisoner a "new status" and privileges (for example,

extra movies, phone calls, showers, t.v., recreation, unlimited access to hot plates, irons, etc.) that are not afforded prisoners in the general population. Most (not all) prisoners in honor block will eventually begin to think that they are different from other prisoners, and because they too believe they have more to risk losing (materially) they will be reluctant to participate in any activity that is aimed at exposing the brutal and oppressive nature of prisons. Like the privileged few in South Africa, prisoners in honor block lose their identity with the masses (prisoners in the general population). Honor block has reformed some of the most radical prisoners. Once outspoken and progressive on prison issues, they become extremely tolerant and docile. Some prisoners in honor block profess to be politically conscious and yet participate in behavior modification programs like honor block that are only designed to divide and control us and deceive the public as to what life is really like in prison.

Prisoners have to start saying no to these types of programs that are designed not only to "divide and conquer" us, but also to divert our attention from the real issues in prison that we need to be addressing as part of our struggle to expose the oppressive and dehumanizing nature of prisons. When we participate in "honor block" programs what we are saying, in effect, is that we deserve to be treated better than other prisoners. And this is precisely what prison officials want us to think.

It does not matter that one many not be a snitch or hold on to his or her principles while in honor block. That is beside the point. The point is that through our participation in these type of "divide and conquer" programs, we are helping prison officials to foster disunity amongst prisoners and cover-up the racism, brutality and other injustices that are allowed to exist in prisons.

The privileged few in South Africa are rapidly waking up to how the government has been using them to slow down the liberation movement in South Africa. Isn't it time for prisoners in honor block, who are being used by prison officials to divide and control prisoners and confuse the public, to wake up too? ~

*Kenya Nkrumah (Charles Montgomery)
Box 500 #75-B-1534
Elmira, NY 14902*



Update on New Jersey — Guards didn't like Hatari's article

Let the prison door(s) open; and the real dragons will fly out..." (Ho Chi Minh)

As PNS readers know, I submitted an article in the Jan/Feb* edition of the *Bulldozer* entitled "New Jersey's Marion". As expected, the piece wasn't too "popular" amongst those who were the targets of it, and so, harassment by certain officers here has escalated, and become more personal; particularly by officers Gardella and Luttrell.

Recently, while taking the yard list on D-Block, officer Gardella deliberately marked the brothers down as "refusals" — though We only get yard once a week, and it's common knowledge that these particular brothers don't ("never") refuse yard. In addition, these brothers asked this same pig for pillows, in which he replied: "You're all soldiers, soldiers don't need pillows."

This other pig, Luttrell, who's part of the racist "death squad" who brutally beat Ahmed Fisher on June/20/91, stated that he "used to put people like Us in the ground back in '84 while in the army, and that he was in a real army — not no bullshit BLA..." This pig went on to say that the reason why so many black

people are in prison is because We're always using racism and what occurred 400 years ago as excuses not to work... He also claimed that due to my article, they were barred from wearing their pant legs bloused over their boots; combat style — which, in itself, really doesn't matter, because some, obviously, still possess combat mentalities. Pigs like these is what prompted me to compose such an article in the first place, and I can assure you that violations here didn't commence as a result of my article — my article commenced as a result of violations.

Pig(s) like Gardella and Luttrell are determined to make life as miserable as they can for brothers here at ACSU, though We all know that the rage and hostilities that they harbor are in no way restricted to Afrikan (black) people who happen to be in captivity — their feelings extend to Afrikans wherever they are, for these dogs are hostile towards our very existence!

The repressive security measures and procedures here, which I described in my Jan/Feb article is what gives these type of cowards a false sense of comfort, in what they

Remember MOVE's Contribution

As we traverse into the new year, let us not forget that ten MOVE-warriors still languish deep inside the death-camps of the Pennsylvania penal system. MOVE, a Philadelphia-based revolutionary organization, finds its origin in the teachings of the honorable John Africa, a self-taught brother who — among other things — crystallized concepts of natural law, humanism and equality.

Since the early 70s, MOVE has waged war against state oppression, racism, child and elder abuse, political corruption, drug proliferation and has been highly vocal against animal and environmental devastation.

Based on their activism, MOVE became a high-priority target of government repression, which, under the pretext of eviction, culminated in a 1978 siege by federal and local police that resulted in the total destruction of their headquarters and the death of a Philadelphia cop. Moreover, despite state forensic and ballistic reports, demonstrating that the bullet which caused the cop's death could not have been fired by MOVE — thus indicting fellow cops — Consuewella, Janet, Merle, Debbie, Janine, Delbert, Chuck, Phil, Eddie and Michael Africa were all charged, tried and convicted of the cop's death and sentenced to 100 years apiece: justice in amerikkka!

Further, although MOVE experienced several violent encounters with police prior to the '78 siege — one incident resulting in the beating death and miscarriage of an unborn — since their present imprisonment the above ten have been kicked, stomped, hosed, confined in strip cells, drugged, stabbed, starved, mauled by K-9 dogs, held incommunicado, received broken arms, ribs and fractured skulls, deprived of proper medical treatment, and forced to violate their sincerely held religious beliefs of not cutting their hair or giving blood, all at the hands of various prison officials throughout Pennsylvania. Clearly, MOVE's existence has been a continuum of unadulterated struggle!

On July/4/73, sister Assata Shakur issued a communique in which she advised that:

It is our duty to fight for our freedom. It is our duty to win. We must love and support each other. We have nothing to lose but our chains!

Undeniably, MOVE typifies Assata's quote and has continued the struggle of our forebears. In their time of need, let's not forget MOVE.

For further info, or to give urgently needed donations for support, please contact:

MOVE Defense
c/o Janette Africa
1630 S. 56th St.
Philadelphia, PA 19143

Thanks,
William L. Marshall

Ramona Africa to speak in Toronto

Ramona Africa, the sole adult survivor of the 1985 bombing of a MOVE house in Philadelphia, will be released on May 13th after having served her full term for the crime of escaping the massacre of MOVE, which burnt alive six adults and five children. Ramona, who never quit struggling for justice inside, will begin speaking out in support of her sisters and brothers who remain locked up, as soon as she is released. Ecomedia, and a number of local groups including Bulldozer are working on a tour which will include stops at Montreal, Ottawa, Kingston and Toronto. Final details are being worked out. If you're in one of these cities, come out to learn more about and to support the courageous brothers and sisters of MOVE. It will be a privilege and an inspiration to hear her speak. Details will be announced in the alternative media, or contact Bulldozer for more information. Anyone in other cities who would be interested in arranging for Ramona Africa to speak contact:

Ramona Africa
1630 S. 56th St.
Philadelphia, PA 19143

apparently perceive to be an "untouchable" situation, and these types of cowards will continue to intensify their abuse, and feel

comfortable in doing so, until it's demonstrated to them, in a language they understand and relate to, that their so-called authority is limited to the front door of this joint... ~

*Let the Dragons Fly!!
Hatari wa' Haki
#SH78901
Lock Bag-R/ACSU
Rahway, NJ. 07065*

*The Jan/Feb edition of the *Bulldozer* was intercepted and, thus banned by officials at ACSU as well as Trenton, because of Hatari's article. At ACSU the article was xeroxed and circulated amongst the pigs. Though the fascist jersey officials can arbitrarily select which *Bulldozer* they want to let in; what's more important is that they have no control over the public at large who's being reached.

PRI SON CONTROL UNITS MENTAL & PHYSICAL DESTRUCTION



AMANI SHAKUR-92
RAHWAY STATE PRISON

Sentencing Statement of Richard Williams

On Feb/6/92 Richard Williams was sentenced to 30 years to life in his second trial for the murder of New Jersey State (storm) trooper Lamonaco.

At this point it is customary for defendants to plead for mercy and to say they are sorry or to argue extenuating circumstances. I won't make a plea for mercy.

I expect none nor will I get any. Because I am not repentant. Because I am not guilty.

Clearly this was a political trial and I am a political prisoner. Judge, you did your best to deny this and attempt to criminalize me and keep the politics out. So did the prosecution. This court was turned into an armed camp and this town was virtually taken over by the state police through the months of both trials. There were four fully armed police in the well. There were numerous plainclothes police in the audience and there were scores of uniformed officers in the halls of this building and out in the street. There were even snipers on the roof, in full battle dress and in full view.

All this show of force had only one purpose and it had nothing to do with security. It was meant to prejudice the jury, the press, the public and scare the witnesses. This was a trial by force and fear, and had nothing to do with justice. My single person could not justify all these police. I went through 4 trials as a political prisoner in various courts — two being here. And never had I made any overt act or was violent nor was a problem in the court. Yet every time I scratched numerous police in court reacted. It was meant to scare the jury. Your refusal to recognize this is a clear indication of your willingness to comply with my frame-up. You claim to be an arbiter and not a participant but your actions or inactions and decisions belie that. You drastically limited my voir dire and you gave a flimsy reason, that there hadn't been any recent publicity, and that the town forgot about the last trial.

I've got to give you credit — you said it with a straight face. You chose to ignore the fact that the court and the city was an armed camp through both trials. There's no way that this area could forget that and this is the area

the jury is drawn from. The prospective jurors had to wade through all those cops just to get in. You ignored booklets published and TV interviews over these last 5 years propounding the state's view. At the time every Republican voter in the state got a flyer declaring Tom (Manning) and I guilty. If you had wanted a fair trial you would have granted me an extensive voir dire and not cut it back. I believe you took Judge Young's remark to heart. At the end of the Seditious Conspiracy trial in Springfield, Massachusetts in 1989, after we had won the case, he said if he had to do it over he would have cut out the voir dire. Meaning that he did not like the verdict. My hung jury last time was not to your liking, so you ensured that we couldn't weed out prejudiced jurors. They had to be biased and it showed in the verdict.



You only granted most of our requests on procedure because they were more than reasonable and denying them might have meant a reversal later. The first trial you denied us money for experts when we clearly needed it. You were forced to give us money this time because of an appellate decision. But then you severely limited the funds. The state's case was all circumstantial and wholly relied on expert testimony. They spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on experts alone, so our pittance was only a drop in the bucket.

You allowed all my witnesses and supporters to be harassed and wouldn't stop it when told about it. You said that you didn't see it and couldn't act. You didn't see the shooting but you sure made plenty of decisions around it. The civilian witnesses to the shoot-out obviously decided in their minds that I must have done it, and I feel the show of force pushed them in that direction. They blatantly tailored their testimony: their first reports said they saw 2 or 3 people in the car. At the first trial they said they saw 2 or 3 people. This time around they all got selective memories. They now claim they saw only 2 people and when reminded of their past testimony they all didn't remember. They all conformed to the state's assertions.

The verdict was crazy. It was based on no logic or fact. Tom said he did the shooting. Yet even though I was never identified as the shooter, I get convicted of it. There was more than enough reasonable doubt not to convict. The state's case was all theory and Tom refuted the state's contention convincingly. But obviously the jury was biased against me. I think they took four days of deliberations to try to justify in their own minds their prejudice. They were obviously convinced I was guilty for reasons other than fact.

You made a comment during the last trial — you said that you thought Tom and I were hypocritical in demanding our rights when we were dedicated the overthrow of the government. As if the two were contradictory. Yes, the government is corrupt and needs overthrowing but don't expect us to willingly put our heads on the block

for you to chop off without a fight. As guerrillas we will endeavor to fight our best with whatever weapons come to hand on whatever field or setting we find ourselves.

There is no justice in U.S. courts for political prisoners or for poor people or for people of color. We will fight on no matter. When denied justice we will insist on it even if we don't get it. If everyone got equal rights and justice then there might be less need for people like us. Revolutionaries are not created in a vacuum. When a change is needed there will be those of us who will effect that change. Whether the status quo likes it or not.

I am no terrorist.
I fight for true equality of the sexes and races.
I fight for the end of capitalism.
I fight for the end of U.S. imperialism.
I fight for a kind of social system which is fair for all.

I've never done serious physical harm to anyone in my life. I've never shot anyone. And I repeat — I am not guilty and I did not shoot trooper Lamonaco. All efforts to break my spirit with isolation in prison, with isolation from my family and friends, and with numerous trials, have failed. Labelling me as a terrorist and falsely convicting me of murder will not weaken my resolve.

I close with apt words by William Henley:

Invictus —Unconquered.

Out of the spirit which covers me
Black as the pit from pole to pole
I Thank whatever Gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody but unbowed.

It matters not how strait the gait
How charged with punishments the scroll
I am the master of my fate
I am the captain of my soul. ∞

Richard Williams #79372-SH
CN-861
Trenton, N.J. 08625

Marionnotes

BONDAGE FETISH: New Marion Warden Cecil Allen Turner the Turd, who has taken to signing requests "Al" Turner to show what a regular guy he is, is into chains. He has decreed that all prisoners in I, K, G and H units must go everywhere they go outside their units in leg shackles as well as handcuffed behind their backs. Trips to the hospital and visits and interviews, etc. will now be slower and more painful. Somehow, for all those years, all the other swine have plumb missed the absolute security necessity for yet another fetter.

HUNGRY VISITORS: Visiting at Marion is designed to impede the maintenance of outside ties — not enough, however, for warden Turner the Turd. Formerly, the coldness and

sterility of the small glass visiting booths was ameliorated slightly by visitors being able to share a snack. Outside visitors could buy soda and zu-zus from machines, which guards would then pass to the prisoner. First, the snacks were stopped and chowhalls trays substituted. Suddenly, that and the soda were stopped, too. Security, you know. Or is it that someone seeing Marion prisoners enjoying a zu-zu or soda might conclude they're human?

HALLMARK HUSTLE: On 13/Jan/92, USP Marion Chaplain Frazier told prisoners from B-block that the chapel wasn't getting a good selection of Christmas and other greetings cards to pass out any more. He was responding to complaints from prisoners about the decreasing availability and poorer selection of such cards that were formerly fairly plentiful. The reason, he explained, was that USP Leavenworth was selling the cards donated by Hallmark to state prisons. But not to worry! The USP Marion commissary now sells expensive cards at substantial markup to jobless prisoners.

OLD EMPERORS: Former lord of the U.S. Bureau of Prisons Norman Carlson and entourage toured Marion on 29/Jan/92, visiting among other places, the Unicor facility where pre-transfer prisoners are forced to toil. He said nothing to them and the swine wouldn't give any reason he was there, he now being retired from the BOP and corrections altogether. Could it have been to collect a fat consultancy fee?

POPULATION CLIMBS: According to 27/Jan/92 "Monday Morning Highlights", the federal prison system now holds 27,826 prisoners, 345 of them at USP Marion. ∞

Now more than ever, Mumia Abu-Jamal needs your support

Most readers of the PNS will be familiar with the Mumia Abu-Jamal's story. (If not, see PNS # 31, back cover.) Having been denied all his direct appeals within both state and federal courts, the next stage of Mumia Abu-Jamal's legal battle will require much money and expertise. The first and most critical step is to conduct an exhaustive investigation. As the court granted Mumia only \$150 for investigative preparation for his trial in 1982, this investigation must accomplish what should have been done ten years ago. A recent re-reading of the trial record suggests that the police and prosecution probably coached witnesses to finger Mumia. But concrete proof is needed. Eyewitnesses — many of whom had no addresses ten years ago — need to be located, dispositions need to be taken, police conduct must be researched. The fruits of the investigation will serve as the foundation for a petition for a new hearing. Whether or not this first petition is granted, it will be the basis for subsequent appeals at both the state and federal level.

To help out with the costs, send checks payable to, and send to:

Black United Front — Mumia Defense
419 SO. 15th St.
Philadelphia, PA 19146

For more information on Abu-Jamal, write:

Friends and Family of Mumia Abu-Jamal
P.O. Box 19709
Philadelphia, PA 19143

The next issue of the Black Panther newspaper

will be a special on Abu-Jamal, write:

Black Panther Newspaper Committee
P.O. Box 519
Berkeley, CA 94701-0519

Letters of protest should be sent to:

Governor Robert Casey
Main Capitol Building Rm 225
Harrisburg, PA 16652 ∞

Campaign against Control Units

PUBLIC MEETING TUESDAY MAY 5TH,
7:30 P.M.

at Cinecycle

Rear 317 Spadina Avenue, Toronto
(between Darcy and Baldwin)

VIDEOS ABOUT THE MARION CONTROL UNIT

SPEAKERS:

JIM GROAT on his experiences in the Control Unit at Millbrook prison

JIM CAMPBELL on the political context of working against prisons.

The discussion afterwards will initiate a campaign against Control Units in Canada .

Conspiracy

con't from page 1

of imaginary conspiracies is cast. More and more people seem to be arriving at Marion on such charges, especially from Leavenworth, now ruled by former Marion warden Henman. And plenty more lockdown space is planned. Neither do these tactics afflict only prisons: chimerical security threats are often used to unleash gumshoes and grand juries to inflict innuendo, suspicion, insecurity and punishment on many lives whose only crime may have been supporting humanity and justice. ∞

The League of Lesbian and Gay Prisoners

The League of Lesbian and Gay Prisoners (LLGP) is a network of people both in and out of prison, who are concerned about the special problems of incarcerated Gays and Lesbians. Being locked-up is a painful and frightening experience for anyone, but for Lesbians and Gay men, the experience is compounded by rampant prejudice and institutionalized homophobia.

Our goal is to bridge some of the alienation which prisons create in our community. We seek to do that by promoting communication and involvement between prisoners and non-prisoners who are concerned about homophobia and other forms of discrimination. The very nature of the "correctional" system works against us, making it difficult and frustrating to sustain nurturing relationships across the walls. Sometimes all our caring and concern isn't enough. We need a network, because it isn't just prisoners who need support, but our brothers and sisters on the streets also.

We believe that the waste of human potential in our criminal justice system is both sad and frightening. For this reason, LLGP is devoted to developing strategies by which prisoners can be more involved in and contribute to the Gay and Lesbian communities. Prisoners represent an untapped reservoir of talent and experience which can be of great value to progressive causes and to our entire community.

LLPG is a new adventure. Plans include organizing prisoner participation in the 1993 March on Washington (see below for more details), expanding prisoner participation in Pride Day, political groups, and all other progressive community events. As well as using established alternative media sources such as *Indigenous Thought* and *PNS* etc., LLGP wants to start their own newsletter to

establish communication between prisoners and non-prisoners.

LLGP needs all the friends, letter writers, organizers, and supporters we can get. It isn't just about giving prisoners a "hand-out"; it's about building a new kind of community.

Prisoner Participation in the 1993 March on Washington

The LLGP is hoping to organize prisoner participation in the 1993 march on Washington, D.C. We believe it is important to make participation in this event accessible to all people everywhere.

Towards this end, we have launched a prisoner proxy project. Those of us who are incarcerated can't physically take part in the march and be there to share the camaraderie. However, through the use of proxies, we can participate in and contribute to the activities, as well as be there in spirit. Our project seeks to match up prisoners who are interested in the march with Lesbians and Gays on the outside who are interested and concerned with the special problems of Gay and Lesbian prisoners. These people will agree to serve as "proxies" and will wear a bracelet, similar to the old POW bracelets of the Vietnam era, which bears the name of an incarcerated brother or sister. The proxy will help the prisoner feel involved in the events by staying in communication, sending pictures (where allowed), etc. Most importantly, the proxy will be the prisoner's voice, expressing his or her concerns and ideas in meetings, planning sessions, and demonstrations.

For more information about the League, the proxy participation project, or



if you are just interested and concerned about the special needs and problems of Gay and Lesbian prisoners write to:

*Lin Elliot
c/o Valerie Reuther
209 13th Ave. East
Seattle, WA 98102
or
c/o Indigenous Thought
6802 S.W. 13th St.
Gainesville, FL 32608 ~*

Gay/Lesbian/Queer prisoner anthology seeks submissions

Cold Iron, an anthology of writing and art by and about Lesbian, Gay and Queer prisoners is seeking submission. Any work that reflects the experiences and concerns of Lesbian, Gay or Queer prisoners, their lovers, families or friends will be considered.

"I am especially interested in articles that are the result of collaboration between prisoners and non-prisoners. A focus of the anthology will be on building bridges in an attempt to create and maintain positive relationships across the walls," says editor Lin Elliot, a Cherokee/Scotch/Irish prisoner incarcerated at Clallam Bay, Washington. Individual works are also desired.

Cold Iron will include fiction, non-fiction, poetry and letters. Submissions should be 3,000 words or less. Manuscripts should be typed or legibly hand-written, contain the author's name and complete address, and include a self-addressed stamped envelope. Please avoid sending your only copy if possible. Artwork should be black and white drawings or photos which can be reproduced in black and white. Please include a short biography of the author or artist, i.e. how long and where you have been incarcerated, or the nature of your experience with Lesbian, Gay or Queer prisoners. Deadline for submissions is Dec/31/92.

Please send all materials to:

*Lin Elliot
c/o Indigenous Thought
6802 SW 13th St.
Gainesville, FL 32608
or Cold Iron
c/o John Fall
1457B 22nd Ave.
Seattle, WA 98122 ~*

RIGHTWING FOILED

Students vote to keep radio radical

by Elliot Shek

The April Fool's joke this year was on some right-wing students at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute in Toronto. Students voted overwhelmingly in support of continuing to allocate \$8.03 per

student towards funding local community radio station CKLN 88.1 FM, thus assuring 30% of its operating budget or \$90,000. (The rest of the budget is derived primarily from listener supporters within and outside the school community.)

Donations needed for the Prison News Service Equipment Fund



Send \$\$ to:

P.O. Box 5052, Station A • Toronto, Ont. M5W 1W4

With 1,182 students voting for CKLN funding and 195 against, 86% rejected the attempt of a handful of right-wing students to undermine the station, housed on campus. Undoubtedly they despise all it represents, namely a means of communication for oppressed and marginalized people and others denied access to the corporate media because of their radical critique of the status quo. But the very consciousness CKLN has nurtured rose to its defense, by a larger margin than anybody predicted.

CKLN has, over the last several years, fostered the development of something very special: a strong, principled coalition politics based in various communities – First Nations, Black, Asian and South Asian to name a few, along with the various sectors of the culturally diverse feminist and lesbian/gay movements – learning about and coming to support each other's struggles. This coalition of communities is reflected in both spoken word (public affairs and arts) programming and the highly varied music programming, and is continually reshaping the station's own character.

Of special interest to readers of PNS is the sustained and sympathetic coverage given to the struggles inside the prisons, focusing on anti-imperialism, anti-sexism and prisoner's rights more generally. Overall, the referendum victory is a hopeful sign and a small victory against the forces of reaction represented by the few students who initiated the campaign to hold the referendum. As one programmer said on the air, the "racist, sexist and homophobic agenda" just ain't popular. ~

The Marionette continued

Liars Figure

On 16/Jan/92, a gang of geeks comprised of the regional ju-jus of the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) departments like education, "safety", food service, etc. etc. slithered into USP Marion to lay down some high bureaucracy. The gaggle included the exalted personage of the regional executive assistant and was led by his weaselness, the Special Assistant to the Regional Director.

Work for the slaves was stopped so his weaselness could deliver his rendition of their mission in a thin and reedy voice audible only to the nearest prisoners. Sensible it was to no one. He claimed it was regional policy to conduct reviews at each prison every two years in which 40 staff members and 40 prisoners were questioned according to a form and they'd decided to do all the interviewing for Marion in Unicor. None of the prisoners with many years — decades — in the BOP and at Marion had ever heard of such a routine being followed before, indicating either the claim was a lie or the reports had merely been falsified before. One prisoner asked how

they were going to get a representative view of conditions at dungeon Marion from the least representative unit. That, the prisoner was informed, would be explained in due time. The gang left before the time was due.

When the gang returned the next day, it found a virtually totally spontaneous boycott of the interviews. Only four or five prisoners in whom somehow inexplicably lingers faith that the BOP might use this information to do the right thing participated. Everyone else knew the pre-transfer unit had been targeted to record the opinions of the least oppressed prisoners who had the most to lose through retaliation for criticism. After that failure, his weaselness and one or two others circulated on the factory floor with impressive gambits like, "Would you like to talk to me?" which got the shine and one request for pay for rap, and "Let's chat" that elicited "Get real!" stares and, from one prisoner, "I've been here 13 years and my chatting days are done." "Encountered hostility" was what the report likely said about the chatting experience.

His weaselness had made a big deal about how his gang was there to solicit prisoners' opinions of life at Marion to "improve" it. When asked about where that interest was prior to almost doubling the length of the

slave labor sentences at Marion and the imposition of other needless restrictions just two months earlier, he said neither he nor the gang had known about them. When asked if it was usual for the Regional Director to do such things without their being mentioned in staff meetings or around the office and presumably by secret memo to circumvent people hired to administer such things, he maintained his ignorance, like he was talking to turnips. He didn't get any more rap there either. In fact, none of 'em got any more anywhere.

The whole charade was less intended to benefit prisoners than this agency of oppression. It was intended to gauge the effect of the extension of the Marion sentence and the intensification of the pressure of its regimen. Incidental informational benefits regarding how prisoners feel about aspects of their subsistence were sought in order to prepare for "buck" that dungeon Florence conditions will likely engender when it opens. The supposed operational review was probably most intended to serve as proof that lockdown is not destructive and dangerous by showing results for Marion regarding prisoner concerns and attitudes closer to those of other prisons. After all, the locked down population had been excluded and the swine didn't go to those units to get the rest of the 40 they couldn't find in the pre-transfer unit. In at least large part, however, the intent of this bureaucratic machination was foiled by prisoners demonstrating they are not turnips. ~

Marionette Editor: The Marion administration has decided to more actively demonstrate its displeasure with *The Marionette* by interfering with its transmission to the Bulldozer Collective. It has escalated that interference by slamming me and others on some fake conspiracy and leaving me the only conspirator — without formal charge. And demonstrating the poverty of the "professional judgement" it touts so highly, it does these things in the apparent belief that they will stop my protest and that of others. Seven years of Marion has not shut me up, and this very day people were slammed for allegedly "encouraging/participating in a prohibited group demonstration", showing others are similarly unmoved. *Yadda, Yadda, warden.*

Bill Dunne, #10916-086, P.O. Box 33, Terre Haute, IN 47808. Articles not otherwise attributed were written by me. Readers of *The Marionette* are free to reproduce or otherwise use the material in it and are encouraged to do so. Send money to *Bulldozer*, P.O. Box 5052 Stn A, Toronto, Ont. M5W 1W4 so there will continue to be material in it.

If you don't like the news, go out and make some of your own.

Letters

Court challenge in federal system

I am a federal prisoner who has suffered retaliation for my efforts as a jailhouse litigator. This has included long stays in the hole for "investigation," and transfers. I have successfully raised the issue of these retaliatory and illegal acts in the Denver District Court with my friend and co-litigator, Darrell Prows. This case is rapidly growing "ripe" for presentation to the D.C. Courts as a *Bivens*-type action. We will attempt to prove a nationwide pattern and practice of illegal acts, in regards to three types of government activities:

(1). Prison officials use the pretext of disturbances to transfer inmates that they regard as "management problems" — a euphemism for litigators, users of the administrative remedy system, etc.

(2). Prison officials engage in mass punishment during disturbances, such as food strikes, to demonstrate to entire populations that they ought to co-operate and cease disturbances. Those who are transferred are often completely guiltless, but carry with them the onus of involvement that prejudices their futures in the system.

(3). Prison officials retaliate against jailhouse lawyers for the purpose of mooting cases and disrupting groups of inmates who are engaged in effective litigation against the B.O.P. They are transferred, placed in the hole and suffer other illegal acts.

In order to make this case in the D.C. Courts it will be necessary to demonstrate a "heightened pleading" standard — essentially a demonstration of facts of this nationwide pattern and practice. Therefore, I need evidence of these practices. If these or similar things have happened to you, please get in contact with me at the address below. I'll review your letters and stories and get back to you.

Additionally, if you are an attorney and want to chew off a big hunk of civil rights litigation, this should be quite a challenge. Your letters would also be appreciated. ~

Ben Kalka #84449-011
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Dublin, CA 94568

Resisting the murder of self

I am a prisoner on Tennessee's Death Row. I have been reading your paper for some time and greatly enjoy the information and contacts. In the article, *The Hanging Sheet*, (see PNS #34) which I found very moving. I could really feel the depth of the brutalization that the imprisoned sisters were experiencing.

The penal systems that they are in are just examples of the type found in any country. The main objective of all of them is to take away the spirit of its captives, chipping away at the very essence of one's being. If we do not resist the attempt made of stripping away what is integral to us, we run the chance of becoming dehumanized.

If I cannot resist my captivity it is probable that I would not find comfort with myself in the mirror reflection. The biggest support I have is that my struggle is not a solitary one, or that there are others that are dealing with and surviving situations more dehumanizing than even mine. It is so very important that those on the freeworld side not forget the struggle that is going on inside the gates of these state-made internment camps.

I have found in my own experiences that this so-called "rehabilitation" provided to those it holds, breeds only contempt among the prisoners. One looks around her/himself and sees the degradation of spirits, turning those within the walls on one another in their frustration, pain and anger. I have also found myself trapped with not knowing how to express the depth of emotion I felt, mostly because I have not known how to define it where others could understand. With newspapers like yours, I am learning how to open up and define my emotions from a political viewpoint.

I was moved by this article in as strong a

manner as I was after reading "Loving in the War Years", by Cherrie Moraga, a feminist lesbian activist. What I deduce from these writings is that it is true that racism and sexism/male superiority are two evils intertwined. It seems there was similar frustration with both authors in trying to define their confusion and pain, yet both seem to have conquered their 'blocks' quite well, and have found a measure of healing in the process.

It is hard to understand, as I look around me at my fellow brothers and sisters, those who allow themselves to become trapped and lost in this system, with no apparent struggle, spiritually, ethically or physically. Positive change in our environment can only be achieved through unity, but unity can only be realized when we, as individuals, find the strength to stand up with all our being to the attempted "murder" of our personal selves, first. With our uncompromising commitment we will prevail, no matter what our oppressors heap on the doorstep of our souls.

Once again, thank you for providing the voice of us in prison to speak of our collective struggle. I will also attempt to answer any questions, you or your readers may have concerning this writing/position. ~

Derrick Quintero #165463
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7475 Cockrill Bend Industrial Road
Nashville, TN 37243-0471



Ohio prisoners speak out!

I recently received your sample packet. I am glad to see that there are such organizations as yours in existence. I did not realize it until a friend of mine here at the prison informed me of it. I am wanting to be active while I am in prison as well as upon my release. I read a few of the articles and I am amazed at how fellow inmates at other facilities are speaking out.

Here in the penal system in Ohio, inmates are afraid and/or discouraged from speaking out. This is why I am writing this letter. My hope is to get other prisoners to speak out against the mistreatment and inhuman conditions in this state's correctional facilities.

I am sure that your staff at PNS have heard it all before concerning discrimination against different cultures and different beliefs by certain inmates. But I have come to realize that most of what the administration does here in Ohio is for a reason, the reason being to keep inmates from becoming rehabilitated and educated. These people we call prison officials are merely paid criminals or legalized criminals. Their main tactic is to keep inmates at each other by inducing racism in inmates who are easily persuaded and by using scare tactics such as having certain inmates beat or kill and harass inmates who speak out too frequently.

Here at Southern Ohio Correctional Facility the administrators have done a real fine job in their efforts to keep certain issues out of circulation. They will place inmates in isolation for undetermined amounts of time just because of race, creed or national origin. Sure they will specify rule violations. But I have personally seen and experienced such confinement for issues such as associations, sexual preference and dislike towards me. While in all actuality I had not violated a rule.

I will end this with a note to prisoners in Ohio's madhouses: Speak out and let's get something done about this craziness that exists in these prisons. If anyone in Ohio has suggestions or comments please contact me at: ~

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